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FOR E. N.

AMUSING AND INSTRUCTIVE
TALES FOR YOUTH:
IN
THIRTY POEMS.

WITH
MORAL APPLICATIONS
IN PROSE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"Choice Emblems for the Improvement of Youth," &c.

ORNAMENTED WITH CUTS, NEATLY DESIGNED AND
ENGRAVED ON WOOD,

BY



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P R E F A C E.

THE following MORAL TALES are submitted to the Public by the Author of "CHOICE EMBLEMS;" to which Work they are indeed intended as a Companion. The reception with which that Book was favoured, demands the warmest return of gratitude from the Writer, who considers himself as never more usefully employed, than when exerting his small talents for the instruction of Youth.

It is not intended here to trespass on the patience of the Reader with a long Preface, which, to a little Work of this nature appears unnecessary. It will be sufficient to observe, that as a sort of improvement, these Tales are divided into two classes; that the first are designed chiefly for Children, while the latter, in which as well the style as the choice of subjects, will be found

a little more elevated, are more immediately addressed to the riper understandings of Youth : the former consist, for the most part, of fabulous stories ; the latter of subjects drawn, either in the Tale or in the Moral, from History and Experience.

An unaffected simplicity, however, it is hoped, will be found to pervade the whole, connected at the same time with such a vein of morality as may serve imperceptibly to instruct those whom it appears intended only to amuse, which, as it is the avowed design, has been the serious endeavour of

The Public's

Obliged humble servant,

J. H. W.

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POETICAL

POETICAL INTRODUCTION.

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AL
TO those who patient can attend
Instruction's voice—can learn and mend,
Curb Passion's course by Wisdom's rein—
To such we here devote the strain;
Prompt to improve and to invite,
We blend instruction with delight.

Nor wonder if to youth we sing,
And here our SECOND OFFERING bring;
For lessons learn'd in early days
May prove a source of lasting praise;
And seed thus sown in tender years,
Matur'd, a plenteous harvest bears,
Virtue the ground, for all beside
Is empty vaunt and fruitless pride:
The idle train can never find
True satisfaction for the mind.
Ev'n from the Child, in truant play,
Who from his school would steal a day,
To the fond Youth, by passion sway'd,
By Pleasure's flatt'ring arts betray'd,
None taste the joy that cheers the heart,
Which goodness only can impart,
Which sense of time well spent bestows,
And cheerful in the count'nance glows.

Blest

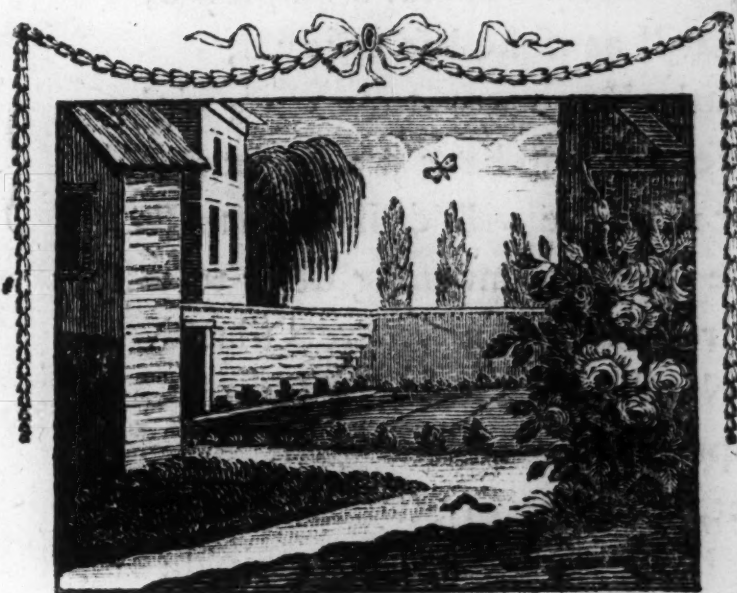
viii POETICAL INTRODUCTION.

Blest are the few, who, early wise,
Learnall excesses to despise,
Who live believing and belov'd,
By Virtue's choicest rules approv'd ;
For them the flow'rs of spring shall bloom,
And gentle zephyrs breathe perfume,
The Heav'ns shall shed propitious rays,
And Happiness crown all their days.

Nor let the grave too simple deem
The moral strain, nor light esteem
What here we sing in homely verse,
Or in familiar prose rehearse ;
For such in golden days of yore
In simple guise just morals bore :
This is our well-intended aim,
Nor could we wish a worthier fame,
Than childhood thus or youth to lead
Where Wisdom offers her best meed,
And with example's force engage,
And form to worth a rising age :
To virtue if these Tales persuade,
Our pleasing toil is well repaid.

TALE

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T A L E I.

THE EARTH WORM.

IN summer's prime, when bloom'd the
 rose,
 With many a flow'r that beauteous grows ;
 Around each garden, field, and grove,
 A Butterfly was seen to rove ;

Induf-

Industriously he seem'd employ'd,
 But still as if he life enjoy'd,
 A little Earth-worm crawling nigh,
 Observ'd, and heav'd a secret sigh,
 For much he wish'd like him to fly,
 The sweets of morning dew's to taste,
 Or rest at eve on flow'rets plac'd.

Need it be said he sigh'd in vain!
 Impossible his wish to gain.

Yet, much the proudest of his kind,
 At Nature's law he thus repin'd:

“ Here to vile earth my lot is fix'd,
 “ With dust am I for ever mix'd ;
 “ Tho' while in thought I can aspire,
 “ I merit to be plac'd much higher :
 “ That painted butterfly, I see
 “ So gay, was once a worm like me :
 “ Then is it not as just that *I*
 “ Should soon become a *butterfly* ?

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“ But when ? alas !—I waste each hour ;
“ Time past we know beyond our pow’r.
“ Mine’s a short life—So now I’ll try
“ To *climb*—I presently may *fly*.”

He said, and eager held his way,
Where bloom’d a rose-tree fresh and gay :
Then by degrees began to climb—
You’ll think it was a work of time :
But full resolv’d, he still proceeds ;—
To reach the top much labour needs,
Or even, with such feeble power,
To reach the footstalk of a flower.
Our tale were tedious, should we tell
How oft from leaf to leaf he fell ;
For, always us’d to live so low,
Each ruffling breeze became his foe.

At length, by rising, bolder grown,
Our hero gains a rose full blown ;
But now the vivid fragrant bloom
Nigh stifles him with rich perfume ;

And

But

And here a gilded Bee he meets,
Collecting honey from its sweets,
Who seems a warrior bold in arms,
And fills his heart with dread alarms;
Not form'd (besides half dead with fear)
To draw the purer upper air;
Without one friendly hiding place,
(Indeed in very woeful case)
In vain he casts a look beneath—
Descending threatens toil and death.

The Bee perceiv'd—"Vain worm!"
he cried,

"Long have I mark'd thy rising pride;
"These flow'rs can give no joy to *thee*,
"This upper realm was made for *me*:
"No farther tempt a fate too nigh,
"Nor, form'd to *crawl*, e'er hope to *fly*."

Scarce had he spoke, when rose a
blast,
Which from his seat the stranger cast;
And

And as he fell, by many a thorn
 He found his tender body torn ;
 His wonted haunts he sought in vain,
 And dragg'd along his wounded train.
 He cannot *crawl* who fought to rise,
 But far from home in anguish dies.

APPLICATION.

Ambition, in the higher ranks of life, has been the cause of many evils, which such of our young readers will find, as have the inclination to examine history.

If such be the case then, with persons in high stations, it cannot be expected that any good should follow from it among the lower classes of people, who will ever find themselves the happier, when they do not seek for any thing more than what they have reason to hope for from their situation. Vain wishes must always give pain to ourselves, besides being most commonly troublesome to those about us. The Earth-worm can live and enjoy life in his proper sphere, he can dive into the
ground

ground for ease or shelter ; but he never was designed to mount on high.

Children and young folks, in particular, should be careful not to presume too much, for that is the ready way to be hated and despised. It is, indeed, proper that they should try to excel, and exert all their powers to acquire knowledge ; and if they do so, they will learn to be duly humble, and to behave so as to be beloved.

They should never envy those who are their superiors or their elders because they appear above them. Every child knows that esteem and respect will increase with their years ; and ill does it become the poor to be always pining for that which is above their reach, and wishing for what would be only likely to make them prouder, and in mature years

add to cares which yet they know not, without giving them any increase of pleasure, or adding to their happiness.

One thing is plain to the youngest and least experienced, namely, that those who do not climb, can never fall ; and such as wish for little will meet with few disappointments.



TALE



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T A L E II.

THE CUCKOO AND THE SWALLOW.

THE Cuckoo is a bird well known,
 And for a sign of Spring is shown :
 The Swallow brings in summer days,
 And over woods and waters plays.

B 3

The

The first, a busy bird of old,
 Of shallow brain, in boasting bold,
 The Swallow's friendship much desir'd,
 With her in winter-time retir'd;
 And both seem'd friendly still to men,
 When spring and summer came again.

The Cuckoo, who repeats her name,
 As if the surest way to fame,
 Continual babbler, idle guest,
 It seems, could never build a nest:
 She therefore to her friend apply'd,
 Who ne'er her friendly aid deny'd:
 Her wants she told; it was agreed
 The Swallow should supply her need.
 Well pleas'd they met;—with friendly
 care

The Swallow all things would prepare;
 The Cuckoo, tho' instructed, try'd
 Her native ignorance to hide—
 "All this I knew," she pertly cries;
 "Then why d'ye ask?" her friend replies.

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Still they proceed, and still by rote
The Cuckoo chaunts the self-same note :

“ This presently,” says she, “ will do,,
“ As I know well—*Cuckoo ! Cuckoo !*”

The Swallow, out of patience quite,
Resolves to quit the work outright :

“ Since you,” she angry cries, “ proclaim
“ Your knowledge thus, and empty name;
“ If you yourself could build before,
“ Do it, and trouble me no more.”

Th’ offended Swallow flew away,
And thus the work unfinish’d lay.
The Cuckoo now (a bird unblest)
Her eggs lays in another’s nest.

The Cuckoo and the Swallow are both
supposed to be birds of passage, that is,
such as stay in our country during summer,
but on the approach of the winter
season travel into warmer climates. The
fable is founded on an old tradition, or
story

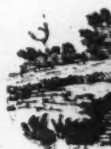
story frequently told, in some distant countries.—That the Cuckoo lays her eggs in the nests of other birds, is a truth; and, what is yet worse, she is frequently base enough to suck and destroy those of the injured owner.

APPLICATION.

The moral of this fable is obvious:—Those who are unlearned or ignorant in any thing which it is proper for them to become acquainted with, should never be either ashamed or impatient of being taught. For to pretend or suppose we know *everything*, is the surest sign that we know *nothing*.

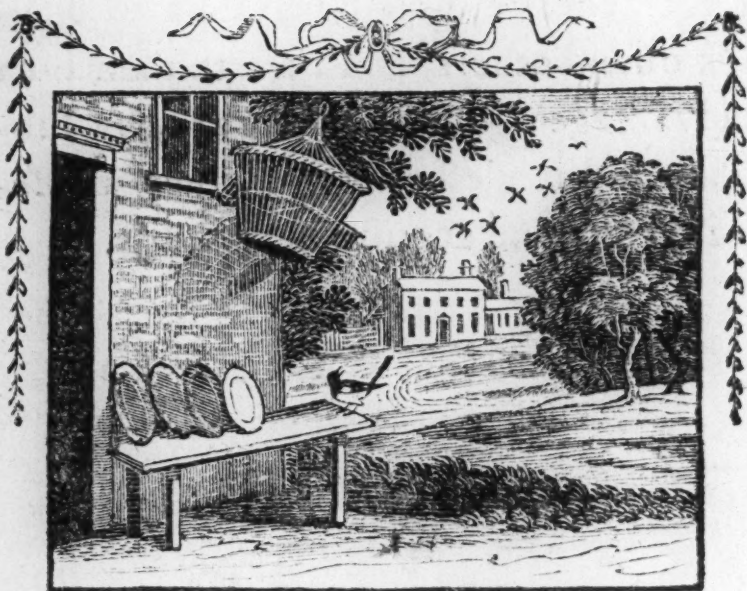
This furnishes a proper lesson to the young, who cannot reasonably expect that their elders will take the pains of instructing them, if they are self conceited, and
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ready to declare themselves as wise as their teachers ; such behaviour will always offend others, and turn to their own disadvantage :—on the contrary, by submission and modest attention, they will secure esteem and acquire knowledge.





T A L E III.

THE CONCEITED MAGPYE.

A MAGPYE, of her cage grown tir'd,
 Had long her liberty desir'd ;
 Ill-fed, as she was close confin'd,
 A clear escape she well design'd ;

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The door left open on a day,
Mag took French leave, and hopp'd
away.

With joy she sought a neighb'ring
wood,

Where various tuneful birds she view'd ;
But striving here to join the train,
She found her utmost efforts vain ;
The little songsters, fill'd with dread,
Soon as they saw the stranger, fled ;
The larger sort, as on she went,
Approach'd, but with no good intent ;
Upon the truant bird they fall,
Resolv'd to chace her, one and all ;
From tree to tree the wand'rer roves,
And with " Poor Mag !" she fills the
groves ;

ir'd, 'Till forc'd to quit the friendly shade,
And by her babbling throat betray'd,
Surpris'd by those she fled in vain,
They bear her to her cage again.

The

More

More close confin'd, how hard her lot!
 Yet those who knew her pity not:
 Taught now her folly to despise,
 Pining she *lives*; neglected *dies*.

APPLICATION.

The Magpye is a bird well known; and not being accounted very wise, though she has the trick of stealing, and possesses much of what is called low cunning, has been properly chosen for the subject of this Tale.

Our young readers will find the Moral to imply, that thoughtless and imprudent indeed must be those children or youth, who can, for a moment, entertain an idea of deserting, or removing themselves for ever so short a time, out of the care of their parents, relations, or guardians; in which case, they can look with no de-

gree

gree of probability for a reception from any, but such as design their harm. Indeed we may be assured, that they will either heedlessly run upon their own destruction, or, to avoid danger, return with shame and sorrow to those with whom they might have remained with honour and safety.—Young people ought to consider, that even where there appears to be something of severity used towards them by their parents or guardians, it may be for their good. At any rate, it is more prudent, and will be found much more convenient, to bear a little hardship from their friends, than to lie at the mercy of strangers.

As to those who leave their homes merely to indulge, for a while, a desire of roving, there cannot be found any kind of excuse for such foolish and wicked conduct; and there is scarcely a doubt, that

if it be followed it must end in destruction.

Those again, who, being well treated, are silly enough to seek for something more, should beware of the fate of a man who died by the unnecessary use of quack medicines; and on whose tombstone the following lines were very properly engraven :

“ I was *well*;

“ I would be *better*;

“ And HERE I lie.”

After what has been said, this epitaph needs no explanation.

“ ’Tis by the friend’s, the parent’s side,

“ That in most safety youth abide :

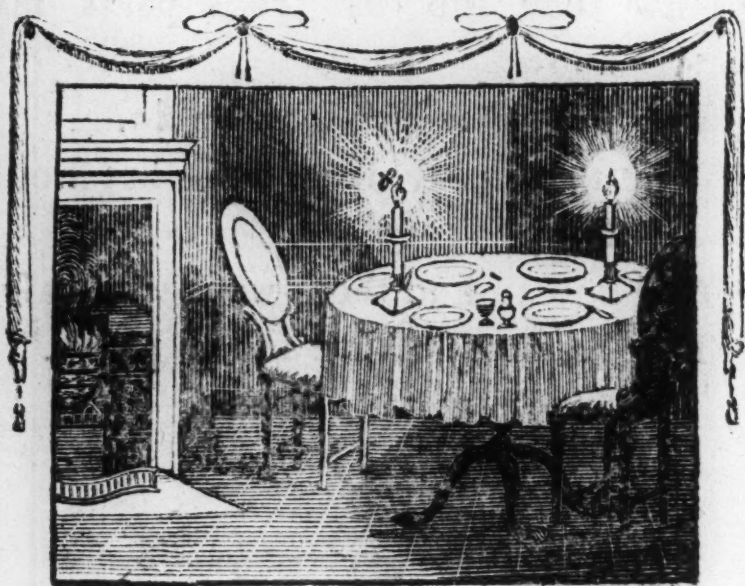
“ But while unwilling to obey,

“ Danger they meet whene’er they stray,

’Till

" 'Till years and education show
 " How they the dang'rous paths may
 know ;
 " Teaching what best is to be done,
 " What they should seek, and what should
 shun ;
 " And how to find those ways with ease,
 " That lead to pleasure and to peace."





T A L E IV.

THE MOTH AND THE WATER-FLY.

A MOTH that play'd in ev'ning's
 beam,
 At setting sun flew o'er a stream;
 Where with a fix'd regard she ey'd
 A Water-fly that skimm'd the tide.

“ Born

"Born but to perish! Foolish thing,
 "To thee what thought can comfort
 "bring?
 "Yon sun," said she, "That view'd thee
 gay,
 "Oft sees at eve thy life decay.
 "How canst thou then so briskly fly,
 "Nor dream of dangers always nigh?
 "I first from Phœbus life receive,
 "And happy in his rays can live."

She ceas'd: the sun had veil'd his light,
 And length'ning shades proclaim'd the
 night.

From fields, and streams, and verdant
 groves,

From haunts which in the day she loves,
 To lofty dwellings she retires,
 Where shine brisk lights and cheerful fires.
 There, while the plenteous board is grac'd,
 The candles are in order plac'd:

C 3

O'er

O'er these the Moth, in wanton play,
 Flutters, rejoicing in the ray;
 Still round and round in circles flies,
 While spirit yet new strength supplies;
 Forgets her admonition grave,
 Nor heeds the counsel that she gave;
 Nearer and nearer still she moves,
 And perishes by what she loves.

Thus both the fly and moth expire,
 By water one, and one by fire.

APPLICATION.

There are certain species of flies which continually skim over the surface of the waters, where some of them also deposit their eggs;—these generally finish their short lives there, becoming the prey either of fish or birds, for whose food they seem to have been intended. The Moth, on the contrary,

contrary, takes pleasure in the light, and is seldom in danger of destruction from water.

Such being the difference in the nature of these insects, the one is not liable to be tempted by what proves fatal to the other:—It is on this distinction that the Tale is founded.

As to the moral; it is to be observed, that a disposition to pleasure is too apt to prevail with many who are not aware of its evil tendency. Pleasure they pursue with eagerness, and with as little regard to prudence as to propriety; their want of foresight exposing them to the snares which may be laid by designing persons, who are acquainted with their foibles, and who are desirous of reaping advantage from their folly.

At the same time it is to be observed,
that

that those who are most blameable in these particulars, are frequently sharp-sighted enough in their observations on the imprudence of others.—They can see, as in a magnifying glass, their neighbour's faults, but generally overlook their own.

There is little to be observed as to the amendment of such folks. When young people shew such a disposition, it is a hard matter indeed to bring them to a due sense of their error. The habit grows with their growth, till at length they begin to think themselves above correction or improvement.

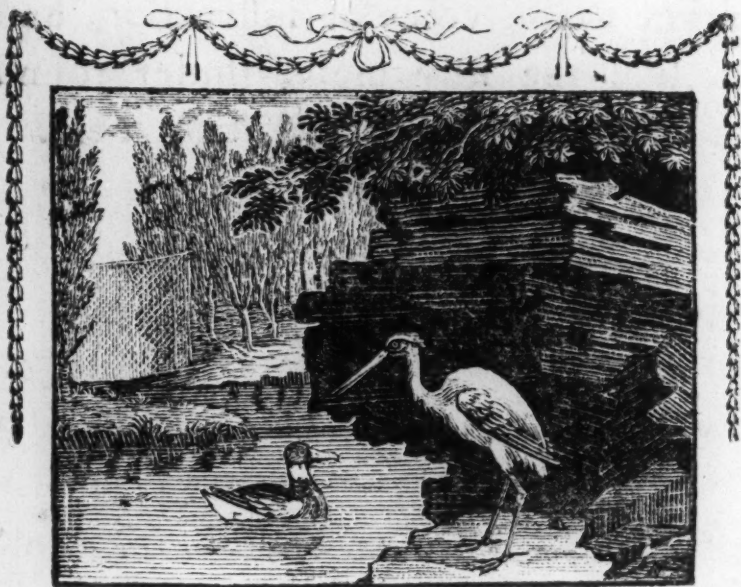
This, however, is the height of folly; since it is certain, that none can put to a better use the observations they may make on the foolish or wicked ways of others, than to avoid running into the like, or such as may be equally blameable.—If they behave thus, they will
hearken

hear
not,
that

hearken to the voice of instruction, and not, like the silly moth, flutter round that which tempts but to destroy them.



TALE



T A L E V.

THE PERFIDIOUS DUCK AND THE
STORK.

A DUCK long kept for a decoy,
 Did in deceit her time employ ;
 From various parts of her own kind,
 Numbers she brought for death design'd.
 For this well-fed and much caress'd,
 She seem'd of happiness possess'd :

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And oft she vaunted of her art,
That such advantage could impart.

A Stork, a pious, friendly bird,
The boaster, disapproving, heard.
"Trait'refs," she said, "'tis thine to prove
"The breach of valued social love."

"I love myself," the Duck then cries,
"And should I not be counted wise?
"'Tis thus in plenty that I live;
"What more can love or friendship give?"

"It gives me peace," the Stork reply'd,
"More worth than all the world beside;
"But fear'ft not thou a day will come
"To mark thee for a fatal doom,
"If e'er these boasted arts should fail,
"Or accident o'er skill prevail?
"When that arrives, expect to fall
"*Unpity'd, as despis'd by all.*"

But words like these no heed could
claim,

The trait'refs flies in search of game;

And

And many, by her artful wiles,
To her old haunts with ease beguiles:
When aptly lodg'd in the decoy,
Their numbers she surveys with joy.
The foe appears; aloft they fly,
And find entangling nets on high,
But these not spread with wonted care,
Are loos'd; the birds restor'd to air.

As thus the snare the strangers shun,
The angry fowler loads his gun.
He shoots; but ill his aim succeeds;
For 'tis his own Decoy-duck bleeds.
In agonies she yields her breath,
And thinks upon the Stork in death.

APPLICATION.

In many places ducks are taken by what is called a decoy, somewhat in the following manner:—One of their kind, bred for the purpose, flies abroad, and, at
times

times, brings back with her other ducks. These, becoming familiar by degrees, are surprised, at a proper season, by means of nets stretched between trees over a pond. A dog being sent into the water, they attempt to fly from him, but are entangled and taken along with their false friend, who neither fears nor receives any injury, but is carefully kept in order again to render the same service. If, however, the net break, or give way, then the whole of the covey have, of course, the means of escaping from the snare that was designed for them, unless prevented by the murderer's gun.

The stork also mentioned in the fable is a bird of the crane kind, very social, and delighting in the company of its own species; it is reported, that the young stork will carry its aged parent on its back.

There can be nothing more hateful in

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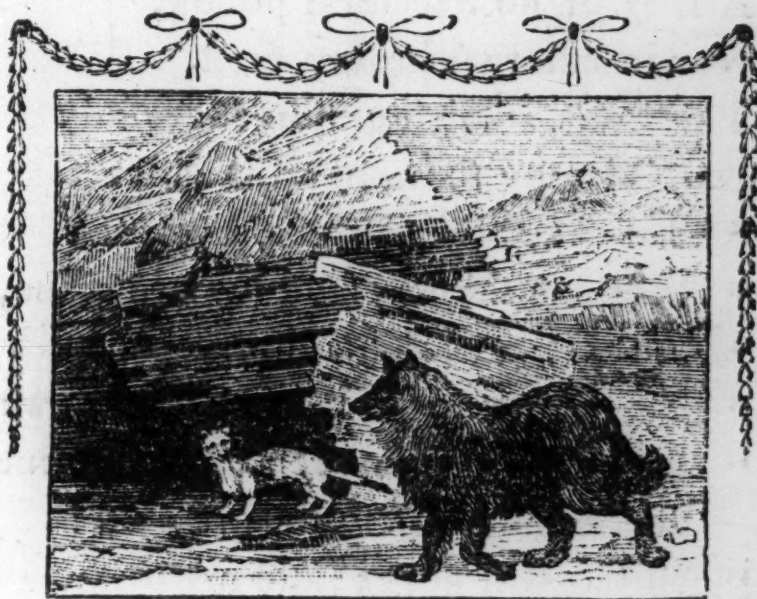
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the sight of God or man than treachery, which, sooner or later, is sure to meet with the punishment it deserves ; and certainly no severity can be too great for those who betray their friends :

“ Nor can there be a law more just for all,
“ Than when by their own arts the traitors fall.”

TALE

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T A L E ' VI.

THE ENVIOUS DOG AND THE
ERMINE.

IN Tartary's bleak frozen land,
Where hardy Russians hold command,
The Ermine its soft beauty shows,
As white and pure as Alpine snows.

D 2

A

A Dog of no fine form posselt,
Nor in external beauty drest,
This beast, admiring, thus address'd :

“ O happy thou, of all the race
“ That wide Siberia's deserts trace ;
“ 'Tis thine the foremost rank to claim,
“ And give a barren country fame ;
“ Thy beauteous skin, to all 'tis known,
“ Can grace the monarch on his throne.”

The Ermine wisely thus reply'd :
“ All this will never raise my pride.
“ What tho' my skin as snow is white,
“ Ought this to give my heart delight ?
“ No ! better were I form'd like thee !
“ And from such dangerous beauty free !
“ True, I may grace the robes of kings,
“ But hence my sure destruction springs.
“ When for my skin I yield my breath,
“ My beauty I deplore in death.”
Thus did the beast his fate foretell,
And the next day a victim fell.

The

The dogs of Siberia, which is a province of Tartary, though under the dominion of the Russians, are among the least comely of the species. But the Ermine is an animal remarkable for the glossy whiteness and general beauty of its skin; and on this account forms a very considerable portion of the traffic, and consequent wealth, of that barren country, to which criminals are usually banished by way of punishment.

But this external beauty possessed by the Ermine (as observed in the Tale) only proves its destruction. It is hunted and killed by those who trade in furs.

APPLICATION.

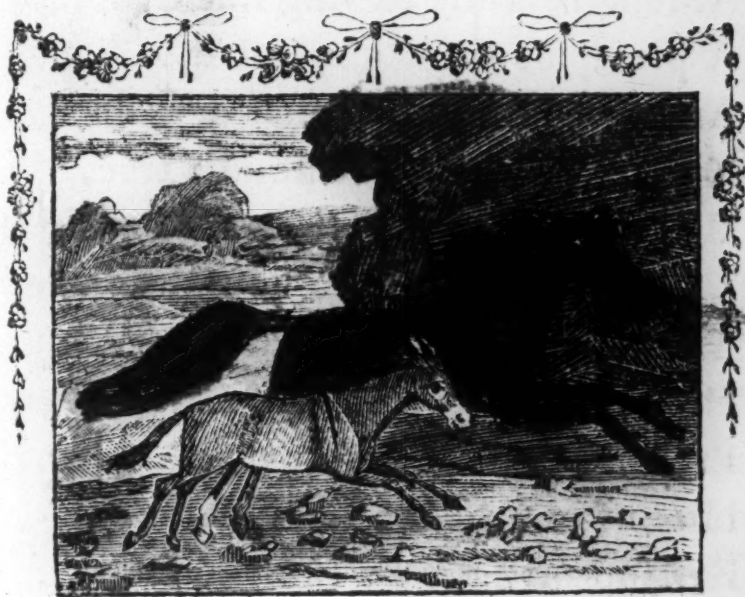
The application of this Tale is easy.— We are not, thank God! all possessed of what to our weak minds, may seem desirable. There are many situations and

circumstances of life which young people are apt to envy others the possession of, which, should they fall to their own lot, would be their greatest evil, and probably work their ruin.

In short, if we consider (which is really the case) that those things alone are good for us, which none, though they may envy, can deprive us of, we should be inclined to wish for little more than wisdom and virtue, from the enjoyment of which no harm can result, and which man, nor multitudes of men, can never take away. They will, however, make us respected in this world, and conduct us on the road to future and everlasting bliss.

TALE

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T A L E VII.

THE HORSE AND THE MULE.

THE pamper'd steed, of swiftness
proud,

Pranc'd o'er the plains, and neigh'd aloud,
A Mule he met of sober pace,
And straight defy'd her to the race.
Long she declin'd to try the course ;
How should *she* match in speed the horse ?

At

At length, while pawing side by side,
A precipice the mule espy'd,
And in her turn the horse defy'd.
Near to its foot there stood a tree,
Which both agreed the goal should be.

Hasty rush'd on the bounding steed,
And slowly sees the Mule proceed;
He sees, and scorns; but as they bend,
From the rough mountain to descend,
He finds his boasted swiftness vain,
For footing here he can't maintain.

The steady Mule the toil abides,
And skilful down the hill she slides,
Reaching the goal, well pleas'd to find
The vaulting horse creep slow behind;
Who, tumbling from the mountain
brow,

Came batter'd to the vale below;
Too late convinc'd, by what had pass'd,
That "slow and sure goes far at last."

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The Horse is justly distinguished among animals, not only for his strength, but also for his swiftness on plain ground, or where there is an easy and gradual rising or declivity.

The Mule, on the other hand, though naturally slow in pace, and by some deemed obstinate, is steady and equal in her motion, and will carry, at a moderate rate, but with great safety, such persons as are acquainted with the proper management of that animal.

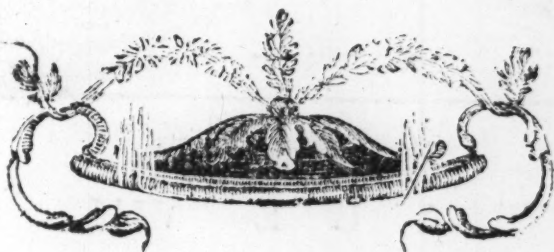
This beast is much used in Spain, and is particularly serviceable in descending from steep hills or mountains, which it commonly effects in the manner above described, bending its legs and sliding down with great caution and safety. An English traveller tells us, that when he had occasion to use a Mule, he always observed that the beast, in cases of difficulty,

culty, invariably made choice of the best path ; and farther remarks, that he never attempted to force her out of her way, but he found reason afterwards to repent it : and he always considered the want of swiftness as amply compensated by the peculiar steadiness and sure footing of this animal.

APPLICATION.

It is thus that care and patience will succeed, where rashness and too much eagerness will lose the prize. It is not merely the possession of genius and talents that will carry young folks happily through life ; if their course be level and plain, there is little or nothing to hinder them in their business or their learning. But to proceed steadily, and persevere through all difficulties and cross accidents, and, in spite of these, to act with prudence

prudence and caution ; this alone can entitle them to claim the reward due to industry and application ; for the want of which, we often see the brightest youths fail of success, while those of much meaner capacities, by this single qualification, shall acquire preferment and praise.

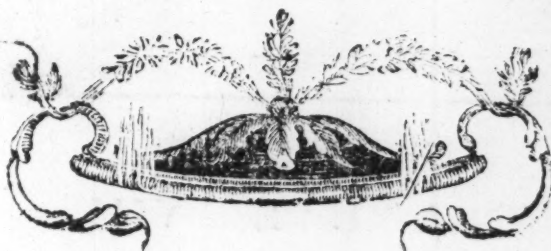


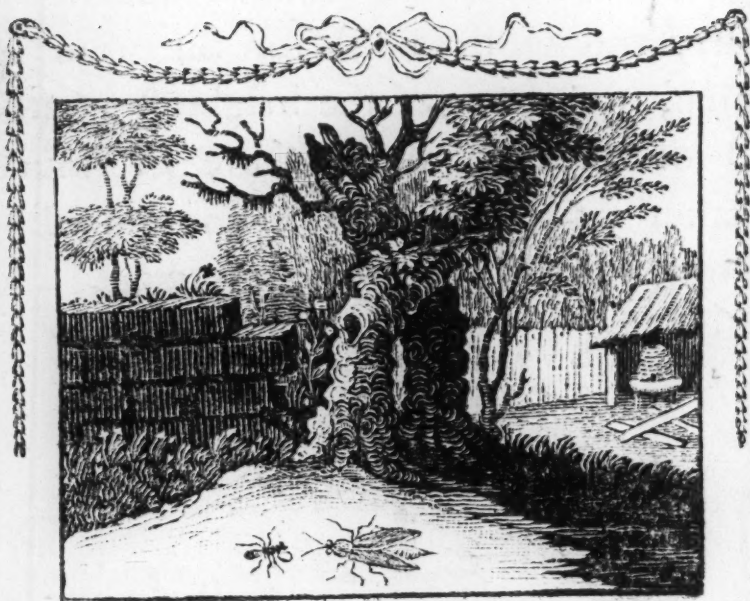
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T A L E VIII.

THE ANT AND THE WASP.

AN Ant, ere summer days were o'er
 Wisely providing future store,
 As home the precious load she took,
 A Wasp observ'd with scornful look.

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“ Poor vulgar wretch,” the latter cries,
 “ Alas ! what toil thy life supplies !
 “ But still I pity thee in vain ;
 “ Wilt thou from labour ne’er refrain ?”
 “ How should I else subsist ?” ask’d she.
 ’Twas pertly answer’d, “ Live like me ;
 “ I feed on honey every hour,
 “ Yet never sip it from the flow’r ;
 “ No ; from the bees I take at will ;
 “ Come how it may, ’tis honey still.
 “ And sure my time is best employ’d,
 “ When without labour ’tis enjoy’d.”

Just then a swarm of wasps he sees,
 Hast’ning to rob a hive of bees ;
 Without delay he joins the throng,
 That pass with ill intent along.

A war ensues : his friends are beat,
 And seek their safety in retreat.

The Ant her well-earn’d stock secures,
 Which through long wintry days en-
 dures ;

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No theft her ample store supplies,
Honest she lives, and peaceful dies.

The wasp is an insect universally hated, stinging when not provoked, and possessing such an angry, pettish disposition, that when people are fretful and spiteful, we are accustomed to say that they are *waspyish*.

These despicable insects neither make honey, nor use any other means of subsistence than plunder; and thus in laziness they pass their lives, continually resorting for food to the hives of the industrious bees; though, in this species of robbery, they are frequently known to be conquered, and driven back with the sacrifice of many thousands of lives.

The Ant, on the contrary, is as remarkable for her industry, as the Wasp for its indolence, and is continually employed

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ployed during the summer in laying up store to provide for her wants in the winter, when no food can be procured.—

“Go to the Ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways, and be wise,” said King Solomon.

So that we find this little insect was thought worthy of the notice and approbation of the wisest prince that ever reigned.

APPLICATION.

The contrast between these two insects is not more remarkable, than the moral of the tale is plain : The idle and dishonest, though they may for a time succeed, are fast advancing on the road to shame and punishment here and hereafter ; while those who endeavour to earn their livelihood by honest industry, avoiding equally the extremes of covetousness and extravagance, will run into no danger ; but

while they reap the fruits of their integrity in a happy and peaceful life, will ensure what is of much greater consequence, the approbation and blessing of the SUPREME BEING.



TALE

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T A L E IX.

THE BOASTING TROUT.

A TROUT that long had grac'd the
stream,
And sported in the solar beam,
Would boast (tho' anglers others took)
He scorn'd the bait, nor fear'd the hook.

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"These I escape," he proudly cries,
"By age and by experience wise.
"Such schemes while I with caution shun,
"I ne'er by fraud can be undone."

He said :—Behind a veil of clouds
The sun his noon-day splendor shrouds,
When gently one approach'd the shore,
Nor rod, nor line, nor hook he bore ;
But on the bank he seem'd to stray,
Merely to see the fishes play.
The trout o'er rippling water rides,
And boldly near the stranger glides.
The man, intent, his art applies,
By wily means to win his prize,
Which, without bait, he easy gains,
Tickles, and takes him for his pains.
Thus he, who could the hook avoid,
Was by false confidence destroy'd.

The angler commonly catches fish by
means of a hook, on which he places (as
a bait)

a bait) a fly or a worm, or whatever else the fish are supposed to be most fond of. The Trout, however, is often caught by *tickling* only : an apt emblem of the fatal consequences of indulgence in pleasure without caution or moderation.

APPLICATION.

It requires great care and prudence to guard against flattery, to the attacks of which we are generally most exposed in the period between childhood and the prime of youth. Those who design our harm, aware of this, spread their snares accordingly.

Flattery (as it plainly appears) is most dangerous, inasmuch as it is most pleasing : and the modes of flattering are so numerous and so different, that it is no easy matter for young people to withstand them all. The best advice, however, that we

we can bestow is, not to trust too much to fair words or promises from those whom they do not very well know, especially when these tend to encourage or cherish their most favourite passions or desires. And particularly to suspect evil intentions in such as would make them dissatisfied with their parents, relations, or long-tried friends, or discontented with their home: for by flattering youth in their foibles, as the Trout was flattered in his vanity, they deceive and betray them to destruction.



T A L E

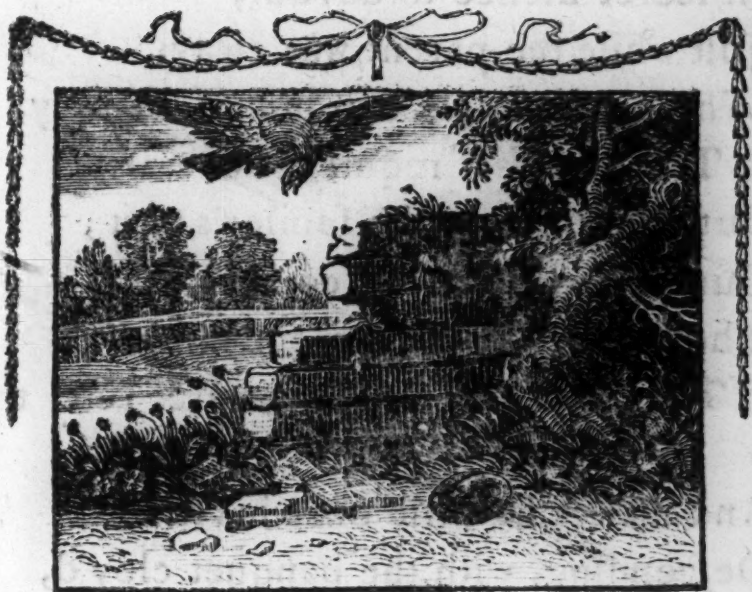
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T A L E X.

THE SERPENT AND THE EAGLE.

A SERPENT in his glitt'ring pride,
 A harmless sparrow's nest espy'd;
 To mischief prone, with savage joy
 He sought the nestlings to destroy.

He

He mark'd the place, then chose an hour,
In secret silence to devour,
Just while the parent was away,
Whose cries might rob him of his prey.

This to effect requir'd some art,
But cunning was the spoiler's part;
Cunning with cruelty combin'd,
The trait of all the serpent kind.

The tree he climbs where rest the
brood,

And makes six little ones his food.
Descending, with the banquet cloy'd,
The recent murders he enjoy'd.
But lo! there darted from above
An Eagle (call'd the bird of Jove),
Who saw the serpent lie beneath,
And mark'd him out for instant death,
With such a promis'd feast well pleas'd,
The destin'd prey at once he seiz'd,
Who, trembling, struggling, all in vain,
Fail'd not most loudly to complain.

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The Eagle's breast with anger burn'd,
 And straight this answer he return'd :
 " Have I not seen from yonder sky,
 " What lawless deeds thy wants supply ?
 " Hast thou not us'd thy skill and power,
 " The sparrow's offspring to devour ?
 " If these *you* claim as proper food,
 " So are to *me* the Serpent brood.
 " Then know thy plaints are all too late,
 " Nor hope to fly from certain fate."

He said.—His talons he apply'd ;
 The Serpent unlamented died.

The subtilty of the Serpent is well known. In many countries these animals grow to an amazing size, and commonly make small birds their prey. On the other hand, they are themselves the prey of the Eagles, with whom, however, they often maintain a powerful struggle.

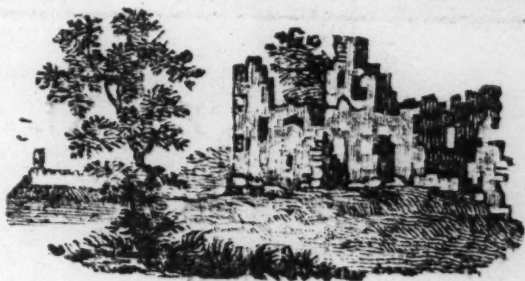
APPLICATION.

In this tale we are furnished with a striking picture of the inevitable punishment of fraud and cruelty. For those who seek to prey on unsuspecting and unguarded innocence, will, either by human laws or by divine and unseen-interposition, most certainly be overtaken by a just and severe retribution.

Youth will, by this tie, be taught how wicked, and at the same time how foolish it is to indulge a disposition to deceit or oppression, the slightest symptoms of which should be instantly counteracted; for it is a melancholy truth, that no human passion makes such rapid progress in the youthful mind, if not resisted in the beginning.

Parents and guardians of children will
do

do well to let this moral make its proper impression on them : since there is no evil so easily imbib'd, nor any more fatal in its effects than this. When the heart is corrupted, life is nothing worth. Let those who think of imitating the art and cruelty of the Serpent, recollect the subsequent circumstance of the avenging Eagle.





T A L E XI.

THE PEACOCK AND THE BLACK-
BIRD.

'T WAS on a beauteous vernal day,
When Nature breath'd the sweets of May,
A Peacock, proudly, idly vain,
Spread to the sun his splendid train.—

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A Blackbird, in a neighb'ring grove,
Retir'd to chaunt his song of love,
The haughty bird long scornful ey'd,
And thus at length broke forth with
pride:

“How blest am I, bright Fancy's child,
“Form'd sure when Nature sweetly smil'd!
“How happy that I'm form'd so fair,
“Unlike my fable neighbour there.”

The Blackbird heard, and mildly said,
“Is worth by gaudy tints display'd?
“Thy various plumage, well we know,
“Shines like the many-colour'd bow;
“But should'st thou elevate thy voice,
“How would the very groves rejoice!”

The Blackbird tuning then his song,
Praise echo'd from the feather'd throng.
His fame, the Peacock to maintain,
Would next attempt to chaunt his strain;
And from his unmelodious throat
Pour'd many a shrill discordant note;

But, while he had applause in view,
He heard a gen'ral scorn ensue :
The birds refuse the boaster's claim,
The chattering pyes contempt proclaim ;
'Till forc'd his station to remove
By hooting owls he quits the grove.

The Peacock is a vain bird, extremely proud of his tail, which being ornamented with feathers of various bright and beautiful colours, he considers as a sufficient compensation for the want of every good and useful qualification : he therefore proudly spreads it forth to the sun, and seems to court and to expect admiration. But when he attempts to raise his voice, it is found to be the most harsh and disagreeable of any of the feathered race. His excellence, therefore, consists merely in outward shew, and is esteemed accordingly.

The

The Blackbird, however, though of a dark complexion, has an agreeable, enlivening note; and thus, without any outward finery or painted cloathing, is justly reckoned one of the ornaments of the Spring, which he is the first of all birds to welcome with his cheerful song.

APPLICATION.

Such as are vain of dress, or mere personal beauty, may be well compared with the Peacock; and when they pretend to despise or put themselves in competition with persons of real worth, merely on the score of their own outward appearance, they will share the fate of that bird in his contest with the Blackbird; for the worthy persons, whom they so despise, will always rise their superiors in the estimation of the world, and put them to shame; although that modesty, which is the

never-failing companion of merit, might and would prevent these latter from displaying themselves in contrast, if they were not, by the vanity of the others, called forth to the trial.

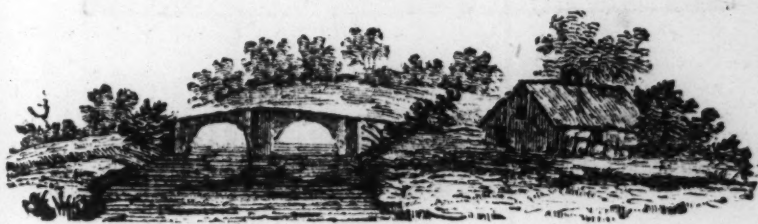
Shun pride and vanity therefore, and avoid boasting of outward qualifications. Remember that the finest dress can form no part of yourself, and that the praise, if any attaches to it, belongs not to you, but to the taylor or the mantua-maker, who put it together; and as to personal beauty, that is the gift of Heaven, and can reflect no merit on you; but, pleasing as it may be, you ought rather to consider, that by the will of Providence, a slight shock of a disorder may destroy it in a moment, and leave you a wretched picture of punished vanity.

If you have any real talents, possess them with humility, but never display them

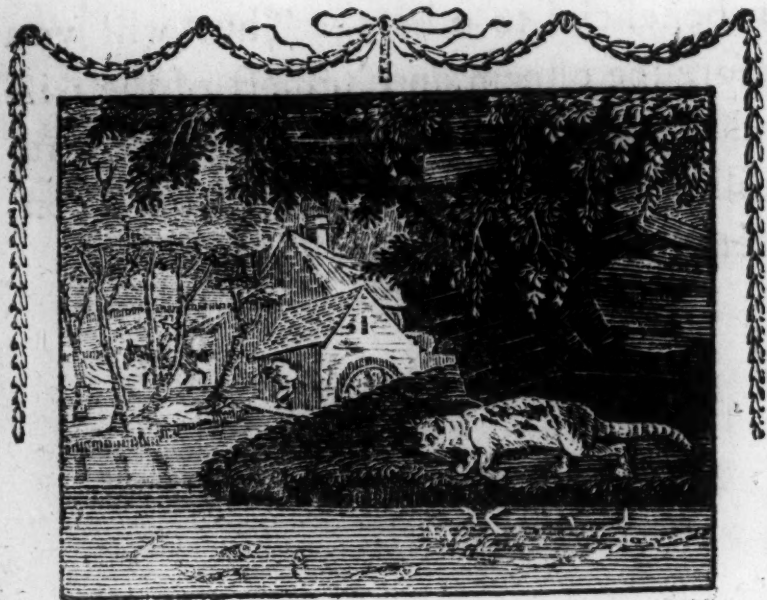
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them in ostentation. Exert them only when they can be truly useful to yourself, or beneficial to others. Thus will you ensure the esteem and respect of the wise and the good, and enjoy that pure tranquillity which can only result from a conscience void of offence.



TALE



T A L E XII.

THE CAT AND THE FISH.

A CAT, unus'd to miss her prey,
 And plentifully fed each day,
 Had oft with secret wishes ey'd
 A pond, and plac'd her by its side.

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And as the glitt'ring fish she view'd,
With longing eyes their course pursu'd :
But much to wet her feet she fears,
And on dry land long perseveres.
And when at first she dipp'd her paw,
Her form reflected there she saw :
Now dread, then anger fill'd her breast,
'Till all the shadow full confest
She saw ; then by degrees grown bold,
She scorns the shadow, flights the cold ;
And once, from out the smaller fry,
Watchful she snatch'd one swimming
nigh.

Buoy'd up by this success to deem
Each trout her own that swims the stream,
She now resolves, for food so rare,
Constantly thither to repair.
And (self-denial quite unknown)
She vows to live on fish alone,
And oft the pond, tho' deep and wide,
Her rav'nous appetite supply'd.

And

But

But roving once upon a day,
Far from her own abode away,
She sought a rapid river's side,
And view'd the finny natives glide.
At one, most tempting to her eyes,
She aim'd, and stoop'd to seize the prize ;
But as her paw she hasty dipp'd,
The ground gave way, and in she slipp'd.
In swimming now she tries her force,
While the strong tide still chang'd her
 course,
And to a mill resistless borne,
She meets her doom—in pieces torn.
Soon as she saw her certain fate,
She fore repented, but too late.

The Cat is well known to be remarkably fond of fish, though she is frequently deterred from catching them by her natural fear of wetting her feet. But this dread once overcome, the Cat becomes
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the unrelenting destroyer of small fish in ponds. In this pursuit, however, these creatures frequently meet their death in some such way as above related.

APPLICATION.

In this tale we have an emblematic representation of the first approaches to vice, of which most people have at the outset a natural dread; but when once they have shaken off this first terror or dislike, and thus overcome a strong natural restraint, then, though it has been well said, and in most cases holds good, that

“Vice is a monster of such frightful mien,
“As to be hated, needs but to be seen;”

yet familiarity with vice removes that horror which ought to operate; and those things become, by practice, easy and convenient

venient (we mean deceitfully so) which, at first, we must have been shocked to think of. It is thus that, losing the footing of goodness, they are carried away by the stream of vice, and ruin is the certain consequence.

Harm watch, harm catch, is a maxim very applicable to the subject of the present tale. Let none suppose themselves safe while employed in contriving harm to others. If we labour under unmerited affliction, good people will pity and assist us; but if we receive hurt in the endeavour to hurt others, we must expect scorn instead of pity, and neglect where we stand in need of assistance.

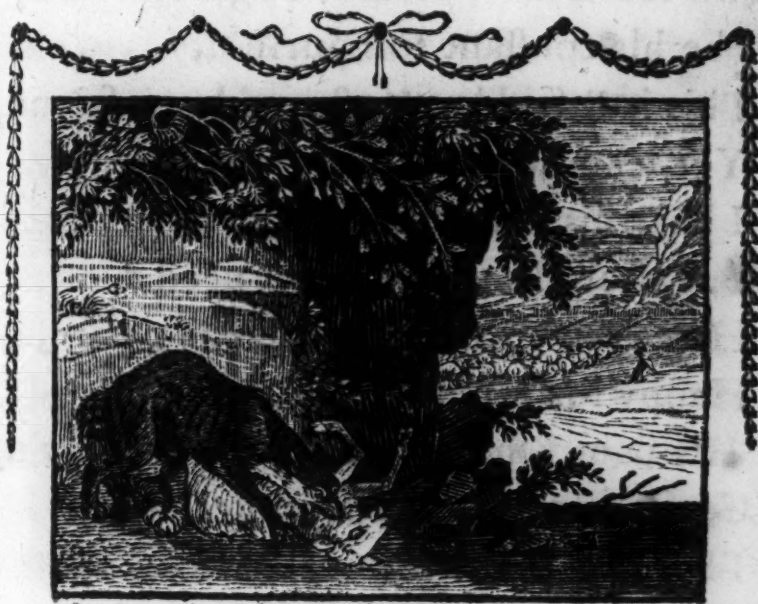
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T A L E XIII.

THE SILLY LAMB AND THE SHEP-
HERD'S DOG.

A LAMB, young, simple, pert, and
vain,

His dam's fond care could scarce restrain,
Unheedful he, but rashly bold,
Would frequent wander from the fold ;

G

With

With scorn the watchful dog he view'd,
 As he his constant toil pursu'd,
 "This is," said he, "esteem'd our friend,
 "Yet, can he answer any end?
 "I hear his voice rais'd high indeed,
 "But after all, where is the need?
 "He's prais'd, and fed with daily care,—
 "Happy for him to get such fare!"

His dam, who heard him, thus reply'd,
 "Cease; nor a real friend deride.
 "The Dog is fed with care we know;
 "Had he not worth, would it be so?
 "Learn then to trace his service
 right—

"Our guide by day, our guard at night.
 "For this it is he gains regard,
 "And sure such care deserves reward!"

So, prudent, said th' experienc'd dame;
 But so thought not the wanton Lamb.
 Who strait resolv'd that very day,
 Far from the flock and Dog to stray;

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'That thus at once he might appear
No guard to need, no danger fear.

The Wolf, in wickedness grown old,
At distance long had view'd the fold,
And round it oftentimes had crept,
In hope of prey, while Lambs had slept;
Tho' yet th' attempt he did not dare,
He heard the Dog, and knew his care.
But when our Lamb alone he sees,
Swift on his prey he darts with ease;
The Lamb, betray'd by wild desires,
His dam remembers, and expires.
Thus we by sad experience know
The wilful never want for woe.

It is well known, that the Sheep is an animal, of all others, the least prepared for defence. Their proper and trusty guardian, therefore, is the Shepherd's Dog; especially in those countries where wolves abound, as was the case in this

island in former ages. Only such Sheep or Lambs, however, were exposed to danger from the wolves, as by a wandering disposition removed themselves from the protection of the Dog.

APPLICATION.

In this Tale we behold such a picture of rashness and conceit, as is shown by those young folks who, impatient of the care and protection of their parents and guardians, are inclined to prefer wandering in search of idle and delusive liberty, which usually ends in misery and despair: for designing persons are always on the watch, and, finding them unguarded, lay their snares, and entrap them to their ruin.

It is true, indeed, that the happy tendency of useful advice is not always to be discovered

discovered by youthful inexperience, which can only judge from the outside of things; yet children should not, because they may not be able to comprehend the full meaning of advice when offered, conclude, of course, that such advice is useless or improper. It is, on the contrary, their duty to give it a trial, and leave the event to Providence, which will always give the proper result to human actions.

On the whole, youth and inexperience should, in all cases, give way to age and experience; and it well becomes such as are dissatisfied with home, and inclined to wander, to consider whose interest or intention it is most likely to be to serve them; those who brought them into the world, and whose happiness, and even lives, in some measure, depend on their well-doing; or those who, being perfect

strangers to the feelings of natural affection, seek only to serve their own turns at the expence of such as are foolish enough to trust to them.

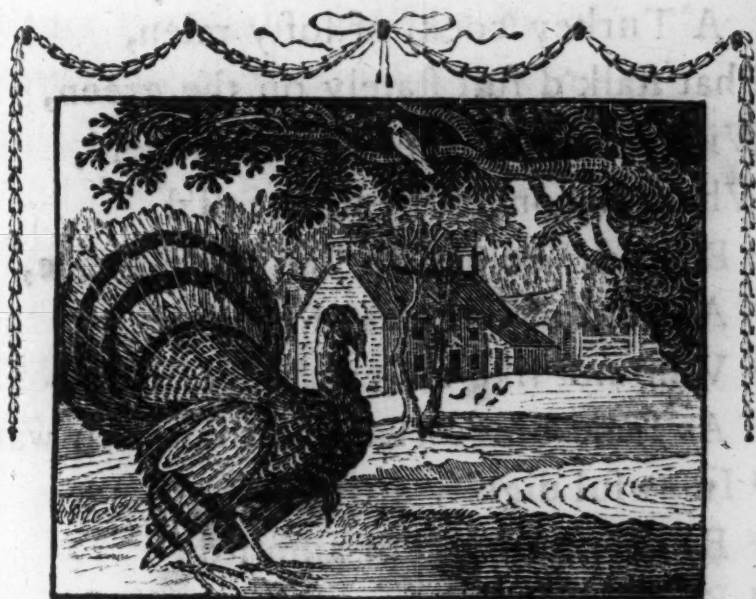


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T A L E XIV.

THE TURKEY-COCK AND TURTLE-DOVE.

A TURTLE-DOVE, with sweetness
 blest,
 Courting tranquillity and rest,
 Avoiding discord, care, and strife,
 Led with his mate a happy life.

A Turkey-

A Turkey-cock, of lofty mien,
 That stalk'd full stately on the green,
 With scorn the gentler bird beheld,
 Whom in conceit he so excell'd.
 "Behold," he cry'd, "an useless race,
 "As void of spirit as of grace,
 "Who not like me can boldly dare,
 "As some brave champion fam'd in war,
 "In awful dignity attir'd,
 "By all or envy'd or admir'd:
 "But whom the quiv'ring leaf may
 fright,
 "And who, like cowards, shun the fight."
 The Dove, o'erhearing, mildly said,
 "For feats like these I was not made;
 "Renown'd for such let others be;
 "But peace and gentleness for me."
 He ceas'd—the Turkey stalk'd away,
 And soon he mingled in a fray;
 Too soon; for of the feather'd kind
 A powerful foe he chanc'd to find,

Eager

Eager they fight, the Turkey falls,
And loud, tho' vain, for succour calls.
The Dove from far survey'd the scene,
And doubly blest'd the calm serene,
Desires no cruel war to wage,
Nor in contentious strife engage,
But happy, in sequester'd grove,
To live and die in peace and love.

The Turtle-dove possesses, by nature,
so friendly and peaceable a disposition, as
to have been always considered as an em-
blem of friendship and conjugal love.
Yet, though its general character be that
of peace and good-will, it does not want
for courage on proper occasions ; such as
when its mate or its young require to be
defended from violence, or in any other
justifiable cause. When its mate dies, we
are well assured, that it pines after her to
such a degree as seldom to survive her
many

many days, furnishing thus the strongest proof of sincere and constant affection. The Turkey, however, is of a very different temper: fierce, proud, and malicious; he is always ready to quarrel with his own species, and, where he thinks he has an opportunity of doing it unseen, will even attack and wound children. It is remarkable of this bird, that any garment or other object of a red colour, being brought near to him, excites all his spleen and malice, and he is supposed to consider that colour as a mark of mockery or defiance. He, however, spends his short life in a continual state of strife and contention, and is scarcely good for any thing till he is dead.

APPLICATION.

It will not be difficult to decide on the preference due to the disposition of the
Turtle.

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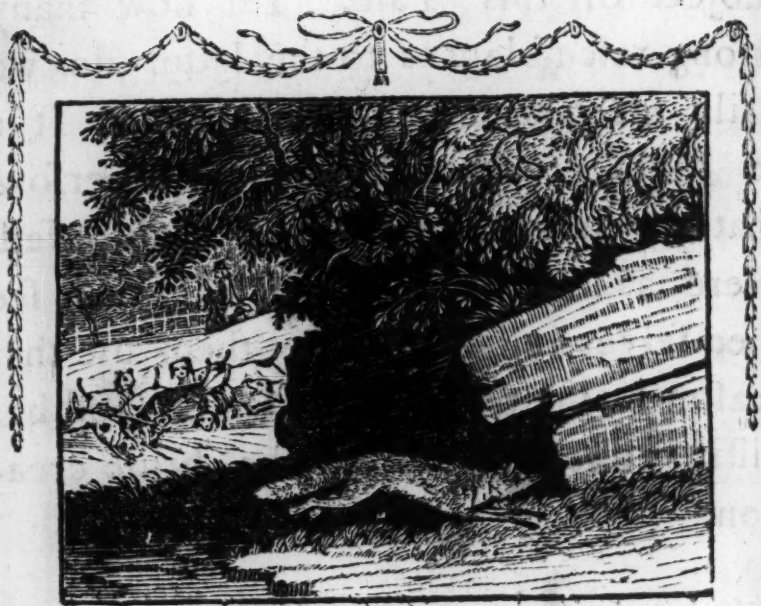


Turtle-dove, before that of the other subject of this Tale. Yet how many strong resemblances to the latter do we daily meet with among mankind! It is to such proud and passionate persons that our lesson is particularly addressed. Here, as in a looking glass, they will see themselves reflected. Let them use that reason by the possession of which God has distinguished them from the brute creation.

“ Learn to be wise from others’ harm,
“ And they shall do full well.”



TALE



T A L E XV.

THE UNGRATEFUL FOX.

A YOUNGLING Fox, by hounds
 pursu'd,
 With trembling heart his danger view'd;
 At last he scap'd the noisy pack,
 Doubled, and trac'd his footsteps back ;

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The scent was lost; but yet his foes
Follow'd by chance, and follow'd close—
Too close indeed! Amidst the train
He stood, and found resistance vain.
Just then, when flight he knew must
fail,

He made his cunning arts avail.
Ere of their prey they rightly deem'd,
A dog among the dogs he seem'd;
Now Reynard frisks in wanton play,
Then joins the chace as well as they;
Deceiv'd, they take him for a friend,
And all pursuit is at end.

The huntsman well the stranger knows,
And to his lord the wonder shows:
The lord resolves his life to spare,
And keeps him with domestic care.
Well hous'd and fed the Fox remain'd,
Yet thought his liberty restrain'd;
So on a time astray he went,
On theft and slaughter fully bent;

H

A neigh-

A neighb'ring farmer's goose he seiz'd,
And with his luck was highly pleas'd :
But bore in vain the bird away,
For soon he lost the feather'd prey,
By men and dogs most closely prest,
Too late his roguery stands confest :
He yields to the unequal strife,
His tricks no more can save his life,
Caught in the theft he yields his prize,
And justly as a felon dies.

The cunning talents of the Fox are as well known as his disposition to rapine and fraud. He is so artful as frequently to make the dogs of the chase lose their scent, and has been often known, by many ingenious devices, to elude all their vigilance, and effect a clear escape.

Our present tale has its foundation in fact. A young Fox actually deceived a pack of hounds in the manner we have related ;

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related ; he was preserved by a nobleman as a curiosity, and fed and indulged with every possible attention ; but, discontented with the abridgment of his liberty, he one day broke loose, and, fulfilling the old saying, “ Cat after kind,” was taken and killed in the act of robbing a neighbouring farm yard.

APPLICATION.

It is thus, that the wicked, by their arts and hypocrisy, frequently elude shame and punishment ; but when the deception is discovered, when it is found that their repentance is not sincere, that they have only laid aside, for a time, their evil courses, for want of opportunity or power to pursue them, and they embrace the first offer of returning to their old practices, then the contempt and indignation of the wise and the good are excited,

and they rarely fail to meet with that punishment, which, though the wisdom of Heaven may for a time withhold, there is not the least doubt that its justice will, at a proper season, inflict.

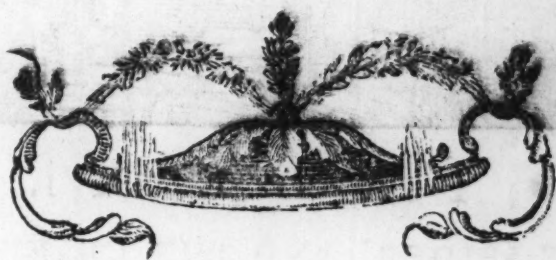
Should the wicked, however, after a happy or providential escape, abandon their ways, Heaven will pardon, and men again receive them with joy into their society.

We cannot quit this tale without saying a few words on the subject of hypocrisy, which, hateful as it is in all persons, and highly as it aggravates any crime, is most particularly detestable in young folks; for in youth we are led to expect openness and candour; and from those who can then dissemble, little sincerity can be expected in riper years.

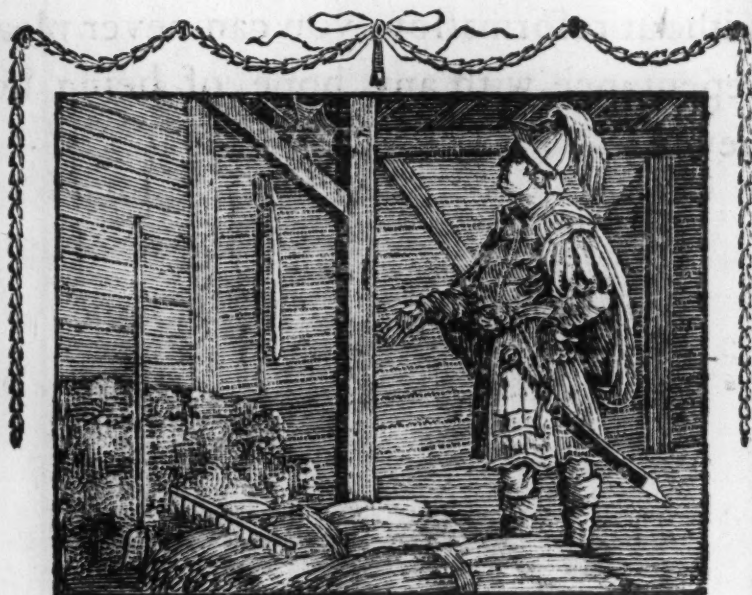
Avoid evil, and you will never need to wear the mask of hypocrisy, or to
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practise deceit; and if you have been guilty of faults, assure yourselves, that without reformation, you can never plead repentance with any hope of being believed.



P A R T II.



T A L E XVI.

THE SPIDER AND THE CHIEFTAIN.

A CURIOUS Spider, of industrious
fort,

That to the fields and gardens made resort,
Once on a time, when clouds their tor-
rents pour'd,
And blust'ring winds from every quarter
roar'd,

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Within a barn retir'd, resolv'd to try
Near the thatch'd roof to fix his dwelling
high.

A lofty beam he wishfully surveys,
And strives with all his might himself to
raise.

But long in vain; for ere the height he
gains,

Falling to ground he still renews his pains.
Now twice six times the task he had re-
new'd,

But, still resolv'd, his arduous toil pur-
su'd,

At length succeeding, to perfection
brought,

His web in curious form the insect
wrought;

Then, in enjoyment of his wish attain'd,
He seem'd to glory in the conquest gain'd.

A valiant Chief, asserting oft his right
Yet, hapless, baffl'd in the field of fight,
Beheld

Beheld the scene.—“ Oft was I foil’d,”
said he ;

“ But, patient Spider ! not so oft as thee ;

“ Be thou my teacher, losses to repair

“ With spirit unbroken, and with constant
care ;

“ Man’s proper lessons wisely I’ll discern,

“ Nor from the meanest reptile scorn to
“ learn.”

Thoughtful he spoke, with virtuous ar-
dour burn’d,

To cares renew’d, and glorious deeds re-
turn’d,

’Till Heav’n at last his efforts deign’d to
bless,

And crown’d his merits with the wish’d
success.

He fought and conquer’d, various toils
sustain’d,

At length o’er his own land he peaceful
reign’d,

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Establish'd thus his just and lawful claim,
He rose much honour'd to a well-earned
fame.

The Spider is indeed a very curious insect, and, though in outward appearance it is generally disgusting to our sight, has some properties that will be found deserving of our attention. The female is a pattern of parental affection, and it is said of some of the species, that Nature has furnished them with the means of sheltering from harm their little ones in their bodies, and of liberating them when their danger is over.

This insect is also remarkable for its industry and perseverance, being constantly at work when not asleep. Its web is designed and executed with a mathematical exactness, and repaired, when damaged, with extraordinary accuracy. Its
fight

fight and feeling are particularly acute, and in vigilance it is not exceeded by any other animal of the creation.

In former days, Robert Bruce, heir to the Scottish crown, had been repeatedly defeated in his attempts to obtain his rightful possessions, though it was universally allowed that he neither wanted courage nor skill ; but a higher power seemed to act against him for its own good purposes, and he was obliged to abide that “ Time and chance which happen to all men.”

After having suffered a material repulse in one particular action, he retired to a lone hut, and there reflected in solitude on the severity of his fate. Casting his eyes toward the wall, he beheld the patient attempts of a poor Spider to climb to a beam, in which it at last succeeded, though not till after twelve failures, as related in our Tale : “ I will take this for a les-

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"son," said the Scottish chief; "I have not been twelve times defeated; I will return to the field; I will renew my assiduities; and I may thus gain my right at last."

He then left the industrious reptile in possession of its station, renewed his own attempts, which were crowned with success, and he gained at once a kingdom and the love of all his subjects.

APPLICATION.

When we are engaged in a good cause, perseverance alone is necessary to enable us to overcome the greatest difficulties.

TALE

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APPLICATION.

When we are engaged in a good cause, perseverance alone is necessary to enable us to overcome the greatest difficulties.

TALE



T A L E XVII.

THE CURIOUS APE.

AN Ape, that full of mimic tricks was
 known,
 And, as it seems, above all fear was grown,
 Vain of the imitations he display'd,
 With wonder oft by fellow-brutes sur-
 vey'd,

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Proud,

Long thro' his native wilds his paths had
trac'd,

Nor dream'd that hidden snares might
there be plac'd.

But on a day, as wand'ring thro' the wood,
A hundred various fancies he pursu'd ;
A stranger ent'ring he from far espy'd,
Who wash'd in streams drawn from the
silver tide.

A fair capacious bowl the water fill'd,
Which the observant Ape long time be-
held,

Unseen, as he suppos'd, and soon with-
drew,

His mimic art determin'd to pursue.

Returning on the next succeeding day,
While none appear'd the action to survey,
In the same bowl intent to wash he tries,
And imitation want of art supplies ;
Not easy the deception was to find,
Proud, he presum'd to imitate mankind ;

I

But

But of the fancy'd stream the more he
takes,

Too late he wonders at the change it
makes.

His sight obscur'd, his paws entangl'd
quite,

He now first thought, but thought too
late, of flight ;

Harass'd, distress'd, an easy prey he fell
To him who laid the snare, and watch'd
him well.

Yet now his lot he bore, nor found it
hard,

As for his tricks he often met reward ;
But yet unchang'd, in his own folly bold,
He imitates whate'er he may behold,
And with an over-curious busy eye
Strives into all that meets his sight to pry.

His master's gun attentive he had view'd,
Frequently fir'd, and oft the charge re-
new'd ;

This,

This, fearlessly, one fatal day he tries,
 And to the trigger first his paw applies,
 Then, stretching at full length, the
 muzzle eyes.

There needs no more : prim'd, loaded,
 in its strength,
 The thund'ring gun soon laid him at his
 length ;
 Thus doom'd a sad example to remain,
 By former folly warn'd, but warn'd in
 vain

The manner of catching Apes, as mentioned in the Tale, has been related by many travellers. The person who designs to ensnare the animal, washes, we are told, in fair water, but leaves behind him, in the room of the water, a bowl-full of bird-lime. Having quitted the place, the Ape, always imitative, comes to wash himself in the bowl, and not discovering

the deception till too late, he becomes so entangled, as to be caught without difficulty!

The tricks of Apes and Monkeys are pretty well known; and one of these animals was very lately killed by a gun, as above related, paying, with his life, for his ill-timed curiosity. He had seen a gun fired, and, as we may suppose, became curious to discover the cause of the loud report, while he was ignorant of its effects; and thus met his fate in a manner rather extraordinary indeed, but the natural consequence of that prying disposition of his kind, which he still possessed, though removed from the temptations and necessities of his native wildness to a state of domestic comfort.

APPLICATION.

The first inference to be drawn from
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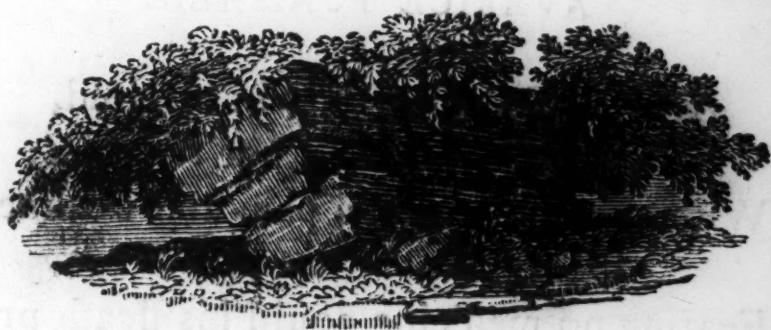
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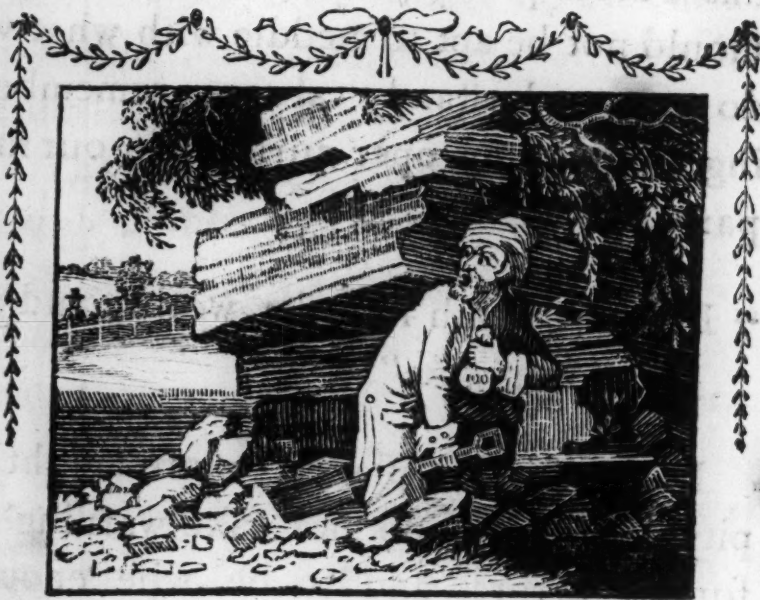
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this Tale is pretty plain ; namely, that we should not be apt to meddle with what we do not understand ; always remembering, that an improper curiosity in our first parents

“ Brought death into the world, and all
“ our woe.”

In the second place, we are taught to pity those who do not take warning by former errors, and to be wise enough ourselves to profit by experience.





T A L E XVIII.

AVARICE PUNISHED.

A MISER happy only in his gold,
 Who kept it, not for *use*, but *to behold*;
 With age and trouble, pain and weakness
 spent,
 Fearing no med'cine could his death pre-
 vent,

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His dear-lov'd treasure was resolv'd to hide,
So buried it near to a fountain's side.

"No future heir," said he, "shall this
"enjoy,

"Nor in extravagance my coin employ.

"No, I will hide it safely in this ground,

"Here to remain; or, if I live, be found."

He said, and plac'd it deep beneath the
fod,

Then impiously wrote, "*Here rests my*
"god."

His next of kin, by chance, observing
nigh,

With patience stay'd, till sick and like to
die

The Miser lay; then to the spot he crept,
Where in obscurity the treasure slept.

"Pity," he cried, "this gold should thus
"be lost,

"Which to acquire has so much labour
"cost!"

So

So took it up, and wrote in wanton play,
 “*Your god has made him wings, and flown
 away.*”

Recovering from his sickness, to the spot
 The uncle came, and soon perceiv’d his
 lot;

Yet would the youth the pelf have safe
 restor’d,

But destiny deny’d the precious hoard :

A gang of thieves had stol’n it in the night,

While pin’d the Miser for his dear delight,

Relaps’d, he felt all mis’ry could impart,

And died of what men call a broken heart.

His god thus gone, to none could he apply,

But, having *liv’d* a wretch, a wretch must
die.

A Miser is at once the most disagree-
 able, and, as we have reason to suppose,
 the most unhappy of human beings. The
 money he possesses has no power to make

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him otherwise, because he is as much afraid to use it himself, as that others should deprive him of it.

Such a disposition must naturally render the Miser friendless. As he appears in the character of an enemy to mankind, from whom can he expect good offices? A prey to eternal anxiety, perpetually in dread of losing that which he has not spirit to use, his life must be a burden to him, and thus his darling passion becomes his most bitter punishment.

The Miser, in effect, has no God in his heart but his money; and when deprived of this, whither can he fly, or to whom, for comfort? Not to society, for among men he will be despised and rejected; not to his own conscience, or to reason, for both must reproach him; and lastly, he has no resource (like all other persons) in religion, because his whole life has been in

in defiance of its dictates ; nor, should his wealth continue with him to the end, could this “ *bring a man peace at the last.*” A Miser, therefore, can neither live happy nor die in peace.

APPLICATION.

Avoid, my dear readers, so dreadful an evil. Be friendly and be charitable ; and while on the one hand you carefully shun extravagance, remember that the hatred of the world, and, what is worse, the displeasure of Heaven, will inevitably be the lot of the avaricious man.

TALE



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T A L E XIX.

THE CONTEMPLATIVE HERO.

A CHIEF for well-fought battles high
 renown'd,
 Whom former laurels oft had richly
 crown'd,
 One summer's eve alone, retir'd to try
 Those charms which solitude can best sup-
 ply.

As

As by the margin of a winding stream
He thoughtful mark'd the sun's declining
beam,

An ancient tower near the spot he view'd,
Which clad in mantling ivy solemn stood,
Thereon, with many a comment, he perceiv'd

The wasting pow'r of Time, and seeing
griev'd.

"Thus towers," said he, "thus mighty
cities fall,

"And men; for fate thus overwhelms
them all."

He said, and wept; the tears so kindly
given

Were such as angels register in Heaven.

Thus pass'd some hours, and when at
night retir'd,

His dreams the same morality inspir'd!

The next day's sun beheld him rise in arms,
Still full of ardour. Fir'd by Glory's
charms,

He

He rush'd impetuous to the ensanguin'd
plain,

And there exulted in the numbers slain ;
Wounded return'd, he sought the friend-
ly shade,

The genius of the place could yield no
aid ;

Blood-stain'd and bleeding, from the spot
he flies,

And discontented, self-convicted, dies.

There is nothing more common than
for men to lament, or pretend to lament
evils, without ever considering how far
they are themselves concerned, or have
been concerned, in causing or promoting
them. This is, indeed, the case with
many persons, who would, with great dif-
ficulty, be persuaded that they come with-
in this description, never suspecting any
frailty in themselves.

K

Xerxes

Xerxes raised an army which consisted of a million of souls, composed indeed of persons of all nations, though chiefly made up of his own Persian subjects. When this vast multitude was assembled in the field, he is said to have wept on considering that, in less than an hundred years, there was scarcely a probability that one of these should be left alive.—He appeared to shed the tears of humanity ; but the faithful page of history informs us, that this same King of Persia invaded Greece at the head of his forces, burned Athens, and committed numberless other outrages.

“ Till all around the tyrant's scatter'd
host

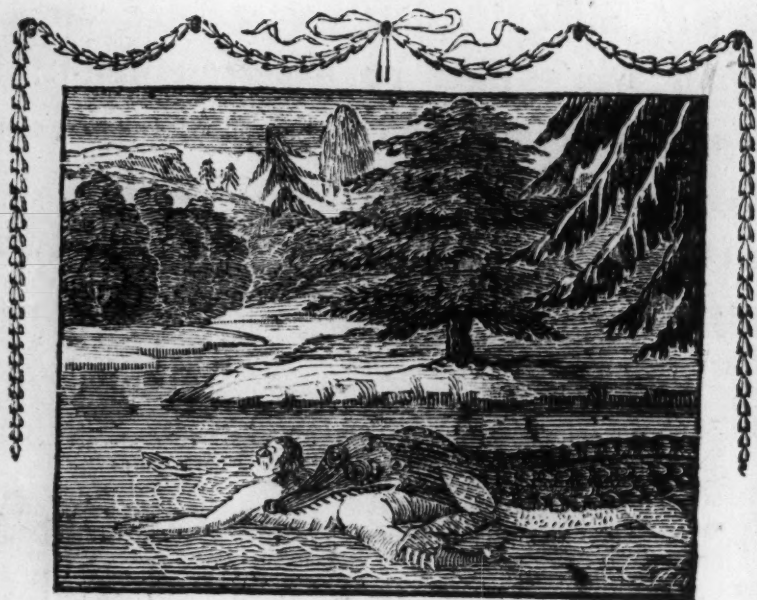
“ In bleeding thousands strew'd the Gre-
“ cian coast.”

This

This lord of Asia, having himself escaped with difficulty, left near a third part of those, whose fate he had lamented must overtake them in an hundred years, to absolute destruction in less than a twentieth part of the time. Such was his humanity !

APPLICATION.

To know ourselves is the most difficult of all lessons ; but those will go nearest to the accomplishment of the task, who are not given to vain boasting of imaginary perfections, nor indulge too much in self-confidence.



T A L E XX.

THE WANDERER DESTROYED.

IN India's land, where summer ever
 reigns,
 And constant verdure decks the groves
 and plains,

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A shepherd swain retir'd in heat of day,
Where lofty shades shut out the noon-
tide ray,

In gentle sleep beguil'd the warmer
hours,

And wak'd again renew'd in all his
pow'rs.

But still to pleasure yielding, to his sight
The vary'd landscape glow'd with colours
bright!

With joy the gay surrounding scene he
sees,

And feels with rapture the reviving
breeze.

His charge deserting, he resolves to
roam

Far off, regardless of his native home ;

Thro' the deep-waving woods he takes
his way,

'Till wider prospects open on the day ;

K 3

Thro'

Thro' pleasing dales, o'er echoing hills he
hies,

While milder radiance decks the Western
skies,

Meanwhile from far, soft-flowing,
pleas'd he view'd

A stream that rose from Ganges' yellow
flood ;

Thither he hastes, and from the lofty side,
All crown'd with verdure, plunges in the
tide,

Amidst the curling waves he wanton
plays,

No danger fears, nor threat'ning fate sur-
veys.

But while his bounding heart with plea-
sure glows,

Fierce from the waves an alligator rose ;

Vainly he struggl'd in th' unequal strife,

And to his scaly foe resign'd his life ;

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Wishing in vain he had not fought to
roam,

But stay'd, contented with his friends and
home.

Nothing can exceed the beauty of the fertile plains of India, after the regular rains have refresh'd the earth. The sun is indeed very powerful; but there are many shady woods to which those may retire who cannot sustain the heat of his beams, and who happen to be distant from their dwellings at the noon-tide hour. Many of the trees in those climates are indeed peculiarly calculated for casting a thick shade, from their prodigious loftiness and the large and spreading construction of their upper leaves. As the day declines, the open country appears delightful, and the more so, where it is refreshed with springs or running streams.

The

The great river Ganges, however, and its branches, as well as most of the streams of this country, breed alligators (the crocodile species), which are not only great destroyers of fish and other animals, but are also extremely dangerous to men who swim in those waters, or who come too near their banks, when this creature is in search of food.

These voracious animals are so strongly defended by their natural scaly armour, as to be impenetrable by swords or spears, (and it is even said, that they are invulnerable by a musket-ball), except on the belly. Incapable, however, of turning without great difficulty and delay, they may be easily eluded on land, but in the water they very rarely fail of seizing their prey.

APPLI.

APPLICATION.

The youth mentioned in this Tale may be set as an example for such as eagerly pursue pleasure, or what they deem pleasure, without adverting to the consequences. These quit the common course or ordinary road of life, to go in search of whatever strikes their idle imaginations, and proceed farther and farther on their way, as new objects of attraction present themselves. Enjoyments of various kinds seem to await them, and they are continually happy in the prospect of what is to come next; till at length, as it but too often happens, playing in the stream of dissipation, they meet that fate, which a little prudence would certainly have prevented.

T A L E



T A L E XXI.

THE WILFUL BOY AND THE
HORNETS.

A BOY in active search of play or
game,
Or mischief, which in truth he deem'd the
same,

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Pursu'd a bee with well-earn'd honey
fraught.

And quickly grasp'd the wish'd-for prize,
in thought ;

But not so soon o'ertakes it in its flight,
Though in the chace he kept it still in
fight.

O'er many a garden, many a mead it flies,
As following still with bad intent he hies.

His aged father saw him thus employ'd,
And how the fond pursuit he still enjoy'd,
Advis'd him to forbear, lest to his cost
He should confess at last his labour lost ;
He hears, but heeds not ; onward pressing
still,

Despising all that would oppose his will,
And while a vain desire could thus engage,
Scorning the dictates of experienc'd age :
O'erweary'd, one last effort while he try'd,
Collecting all the strength false hope sup-
ply'd,

As

As drawing nearer to the promis'd game,
Close to a Hornet's nest unseen he came.
These he disturb'd, as carelessly he trod,
And, luckless, rous'd them from their
dark abode ;

The angry insects, swarming round his
head,

Soon caus'd him backwards all his steps
to tread ;

No more he strives the golden prize to
gain,

But home returns, quite raving with his
pain.

His father saw him thus in haste retire,
Defeated in his eager fond desire ;

He saw, but spake not ; yet one look se-
vere,

Was a grave lesson, full sufficient here ;
To him a sad remembrance it must bring,
Who lost the honey, and yet felt the sting.

The industrious Bee, as has been before observed, culls sweets from every flower, by which means it supplies an ample store of honey; while the Hornet, like the Wasp, produces nothing valuable, but is an angry noxious insect, not more ready to resent any injury, than it is to give one, even unprovoked. The sting of a Hornet is of a most venomous nature, and the pain it occasions is excessive, as those well know who have ever felt the smart.

In some of the warmer countries the Hornet is still more troublesome than in England. We learn in Scripture, that a promise was made to the children of Israel, that this insect should be sent before them, in order to plague the Canaanites, and assist in driving them out of the land.

L

APPLI-

APPLICATION.

Honey is certainly pleasant and useful; but this, as the Proverb says of gold, may be bought too dear, as, indeed, may any enjoyment in this life, from the cradle to the dark silent tomb.

The Boy in the Tale rushed headlong on in the pursuit of a supposed and expected good; but by his obstinacy and imprudence he stumbled over evil in his way. Pleasure is certainly purchased at too high a rate, when pain is the price of it; but how much greater a portion of ill-luck is theirs, who experience the pain only, and fail of the promised pleasure. Let it, however, be remembered, that this is never the case with those whose pursuit is virtue; the pursuit is pleasant, the possession is happiness; for virtue will reward both here and hereafter all those who court her favour.

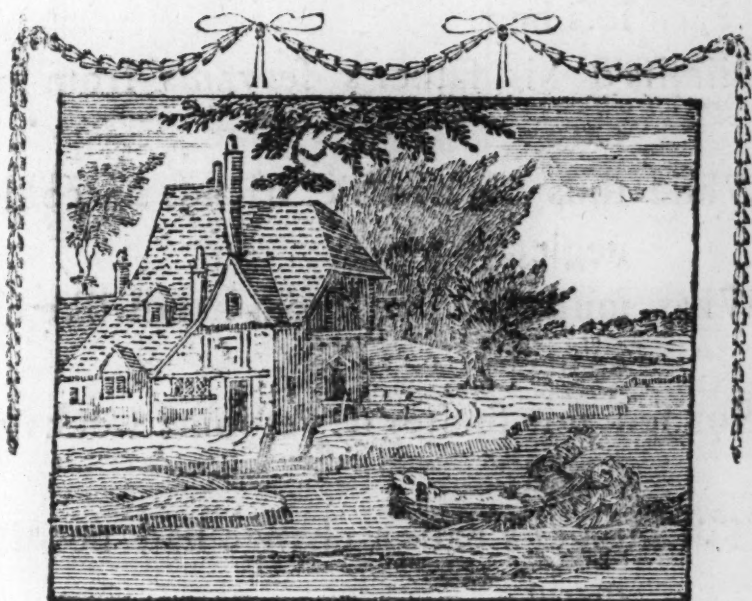
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T A L E XXII.

GENEROSITY AND GRATITUDE.

A FAITHFUL Dog, in happy service
try'd,

His master lov'd, and mourn'd him when
he died

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With

With mute expression; but the thought-
less heir

Dismiss'd his father's servants from his
care :

While thus his humble friends he could
neglect,

What must the Dog from hands like his
expect ?

Nor fed, nor shelter'd, yet some weeks he
stay'd,

'Till hunger's calls a change had needful
made.

Then, wand'ring forth, another lord he
sought,

And chance him shortly to another
brought.

A youth he was of frank and gen'rous
mind,

Happy himself, a friend to human kind,

Who ev'n the dumb creation gently
us'd,

Nor

Nor man's vast power o'er all this world
abus'd.

Poor Tray beheld him as he musing
rov'd,

Poor Tray beheld, and when he saw him,
lov'd.—

Nor while to tales like this we pour the
strain,

The unknown sympathetic pow'r disdain
Pervading Nature ; no, let us confess

We *know* but *little*, often *reason less*.

The gen'rous Dog the gentle youth
carefs'd,

Who pleasure at his fondling tricks ex-
press'd ;

Tray now a follower on his steps attends,
Nor proves a flatterer for base selfish
ends.

It chanc'd his master, on a summer's
day,

To rural scenes all jocund held his way ;

But careless as he pass'd a river's side
The sod gave way, and plung'd him in the
tide ;

There in the stream unwillingly he laves
Spent with the force of overwhelming
waves,

Cramp'd in each limb, and strength no
more his own,

Soon had he perish'd hapless and un-
known ;

But Tray, as on the bank he watchful
stood,

Beheld, and sudden plung'd into the
flood ;

Nor ceas'd till by the garments that he
wore

With friendly force he dragg'd him tow'rd
the shore,

Where, haply, other useful aid was nigh,
While yet 'twas doubtful if he'd live or
die ;

But,

But, under Heav'n, the favour that be-
flow'd,
His life and safety to poor Tray he ow'd.

The Dog is a most useful domestic animal, and particularly serviceable in hunting and subduing wild beasts. Indeed, he is one of the helps that Heaven has given mankind to make them lords of the creation. The courage of the Dog is astonishing: there is scarcely any creature so strong or so savage, that a dog of a proper breed will not engage, especially in the service or for the safety of his master, whom (if he be well used) he will never desert; even in circumstances and situations wherein many of his false friends and acquaintance would abandon him, the Dog will cheerfully lay down his life for his protection.

Beside

But,

Beside this, the Dog is in the highest degree active, vigilant, docile, and tractable; he may be taught to do almost any thing that can be expected from a creature not endowed with human speech and reason; his attachments are not more constant than his instinct and sagacity are wonderful. What is related in the Tale is no more than has actually happened.—Water dogs have been frequently known to save the lives of persons who had fallen into rivers, ponds, &c. Dogs of the Newfoundland breed are particularly distinguished for this useful quality.

APPLICATION.

The fidelity of these domestic animals is known even to a proverb. For the rest, the moral taught us by this Tale is, that charity and benevolence seldom fail
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of a reward even in this life ; nor are there any persons so low or mean in their circumstances as to be justly despised on that account ; for chance may, at some time or other, put *them* in a condition or situation to render *us* assistance in time of need.



TALE



T A L E XXII.

THE TIMOROUS BOY.

'T WAS near the solemn silent mid-
 night hour,
 (Much fam'd, tho' false, for Superstition's
 power)

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A lad, who, loit'ring often by the way,
Had spent his time before in idly play,
A loss he now in vain was deeply mourn-
ing,

As from a country journey slow return-
ing;

The sun descending, sober twilight grey
First strew'd with fancy'd thorns his weary
way;

But when her mantle Night had closely
drawn,

With fault'ring fearful steps he pac'd the
lawn;

Now goblins, fairies, spectres still arose,
To fancy truly formidable foes;

For tales of such as these he oft had
heard,

mid- And to his mind they constantly appear'd;
Clouds dark and heavy veil'd the low'r-
on's ing skies,

lad, And the fierce tempest threaten'd to arise :
But

But sudden ev'ry dismal omen fails,
They fly, dispers'd abroad by fav'ring
gales.

The silver moon then brightly break-
ing forth,
Cheer'd the glad bosom of the verdant
earth,

While all around the yellow-tufted trees
Bow'd to the gently-whisp'ring western
breeze.

But as he pass'd beneath their length-
en'd shade,

With fear the silly Boy the sight sur-
vey'd,

And fled from these; but vainly, for his
own

Follow'd, and was to him as much un-
known.

Now on he rushes, urg'd by groundless
fear,

Impatient in his swift and mad career,

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'Till in an unseen pit he sudden falls,
And long in vain for succour loudly calls;
Nor finds he help 'till the succeeding
morn
Does with her radiance hills and woods
adorn,
When from a woodman comes the wish'd
relief,
And *Idle* quits the spot o'erwhelm'd with
shame and grief.

The night is as useful in its course as the day, and ought, therefore, to be considered as equally a blessing: for it furnishes us with an opportunity of resting from the labours and fatigues of the day.

Notwithstanding this, there are many to whom night brings terror and dismay. Having been accustomed, in their infancy, to hear idle tales of ghosts and goblins, of fairies and witches, they are so

M

weak

weak as to believe in those fancied beings, even at a mature age : foolish and wicked indeed are those who inspire such idle fears, by wantonly relating stories like these, and who frequently make an impression strong enough on the tender minds of children to render them afraid of their own shadows, as appears to have been the case of the Boy in the Tale.

Young people, however, should be assured, that no such beings as these are in nature ; that ghosts and fairies are the mere phantoms of a disordered imagination ; and that when they retire to their chamber to rest during the hours of darkness, or are obliged to travel by night on necessary business, they should consider themselves as

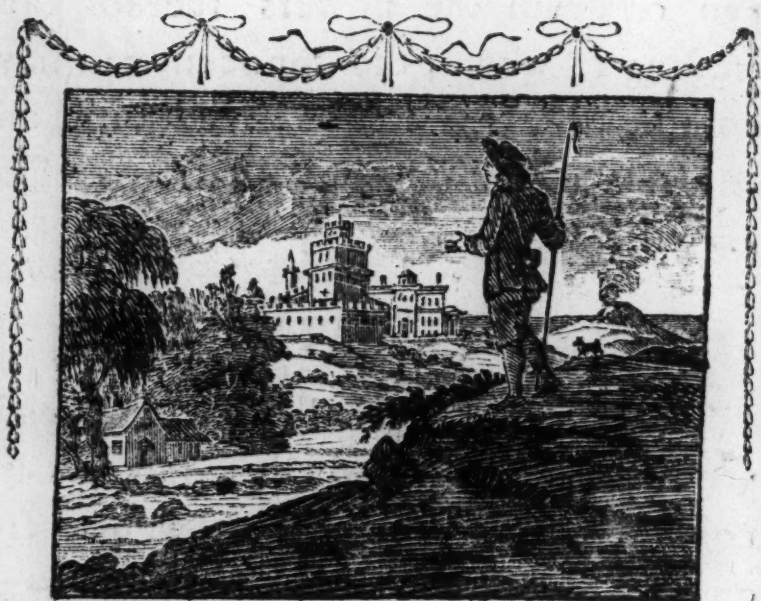
“ Safe in the hands of one All-ruling
“ Powr,”

who

who brought light out of darkness, and can controul the powers thereof, and trusting in whom, the innocent can have nothing to fear. Let us dread guilt, and be afraid of nothing but of transgressing his will.

APPLICATION.

The moral of this Tale we have already pretty fully illustrated; it points out the consequences of vain fear; which, frequently plunging people into *real* dangers or difficulties, while they strive to avoid those which are merely *imaginary*, creates an evil unlike most others, an evil which it is generally in our own power to avoid.



T A L E XXIV.

THE ENVIOUS SHEPHERD CONVINCED
AND REFORMED.

A SHEPHERD swain, the simplest of
his kind,
Nor by experience taught, nor books re-
fin'd,

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As on a rising ground one morn he stood,
With envious eyes a neighbouring castle
view'd ;

Castle and palace both arose confest,
And strait the peasant call'd the owner *blest*.

“ Sure care and danger hence are far
“ away,

“ Where spiry turrets glitter on the day,
“ Alike for grandeur and for safety made,
“ Its wealthy lord rests in the lofty shade,
“ While I, alas ! (no more my fate could
“ give),

“ Earn bread with toil, and in a cottage
“ live.”

Sighing he said, and left the envy'd
height,

But frequent turn'd, and sicken'd at the
sight.

'Twas on the fertile, fair Sicilian shore
The castle stood, where foaming surges
roar ;

But far remote, within an humble vale,
With olives shelter'd from each ruder
gale,
Stood the lone cottage, which its maer
scorn'd,
Because not lofty built nor much adorn'd.
Now night approaching, rising winds
were heard,
And fiery meteors in the air appear'd :
Old Ætna groan'd within, but yet on
high
Shot forth no flame, tho' clouds obscur'd
the sky :
Now in her secret caves Earth shook and
reel'd,
The mountains totter'd, trembled all the
field ;
Bursting at length all bounds, convulsions
strong
Heave off earth's load, and ruin pour
along ;

But

But most the *lofty* buildings feel its pow'r,
Long shakes the castle, totters every
tower,

'Till down at last in dread confusion
thrown,

Its owner crush'd, its place scarce longer
known,

Half the vast deep receives with heaving
tide,

And half wide-yawning gulphs for ever
hide.

But in the olive vale all rests secure,
And tho' they feel the shock, no more en-
dure ;

The scantling boards excel the palace
walls,

For scarce a straw from the thatch'd cot-
tage falls.

The conscious peasant, struck with vast
surprise,
To Heav'n, before accus'd, now turns
his eyes,

With

With grateful heart God's saving mercy
 owns,
 And in submissive pray'r his fault atones;
 Resolv'd no more undue complaints to
 raise,
 But in content to spend his future days.

Italy, though esteemed one of the most beautiful countries on earth, and doubtless the finest in Europe, has yet the inconvenience of burning mountains (called volcanos), which do great mischief by the ashes and hot sulphurous streams that issue from them when they burst forth in flame. A still more dreadful effect frequently results from them when the fire is not cast out; for then earthquakes, those terrible scourges of Heaven, take place, which overthrow, and sometimes even swallow up, whole buildings and large tracts of land; sweeping away, in

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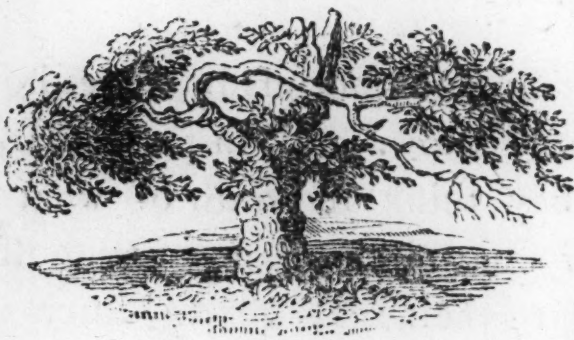
one common destruction, the unhappy inhabitants with all their property.

Sicily has experienced much and frequent damage from both these causes. Palermo, a very capital city in that island, was once entirely swallowed up. Many buildings have been destroyed, and many lives lost since that time; and from thence the representation in this Tale was drawn. At such an awful time the lowest and most obscure situations are always found to be the most secure from danger.

APPLICATION.

We have numberless instances how little people know, and, in particular, how little they think in youth of what situation or what circumstances are most conducive to their real good. Such things as are generally most desired, and even coveted,

coveted, are too often the very things that would produce their greatest harm. At any rate, it is as foolish as it is wicked to repine at our lot, be it what it may. We are certainly all placed by Providence (young and old, rich and poor) just in that station best suited for us; and though complete unalloyed happiness is not to be looked for in any circumstances of life, yet those have assuredly reason to hope for the greatest share of it, who use all their endeavours to possess that best treasure—a *contented mind*.

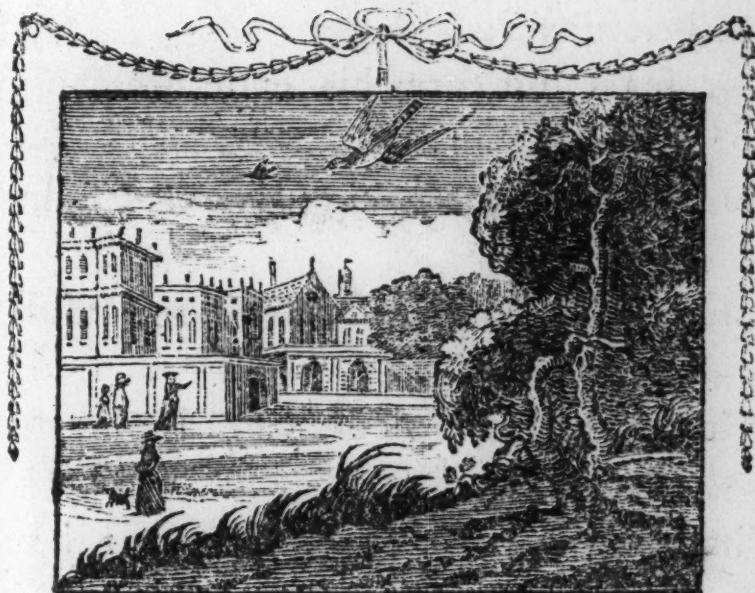


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T A L E XXV.

THE VAIN SPARROW AND CRUEL
JUDGE.

AS flying thro' the woods in wanton
play,
Or hopping on each tree, from spray to
spray,

A blith,

A blithsome Sparrow spring's sweet hours
enjoy'd,

Nor fears nor cares his little breast an-
noy'd,

He viewed the tow'ring lark that soar'd
on high,

And loudly sang as flutt'ring tow'rd the
sky ;

With many a bird of vary'd plumage
bright,

That warbling bask'd above in purer light.

Hence rose a wish the envy'd lot to
share,

As free to him as them the fields of air,

He quits the wood in feather'd pride elate,

Resolv'd the sky-lark's flight to emulate.

Eager he rose, and left the groves behind,

To future fate (O silly creature !) blind ;

And long in course successful had he
soar'd,

While vanity could fancy'd bliss afford.

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But mark ! far higher still was seen to rise
A Hawk, the dreaded tyrant of the skies.

The Sparrow mark'd him circling as he
flew,

And, prudent, timely on the wing with-
drew,

Ere yet within the fatal sphere ensnar'd,
The victim of a foe that never spar'd,
Hasty he fled. Accustom'd to pursue,
The hawk, swift following, kept his prey
in view ;

'Till to a spacious square he made resort,
Where Athens' Judges held their solemn
court,

And, by the enemy so closely prest,
Took shelter gladly in a sage's breast ;
But he, relentless, from his vestment drew
The trembling fugitive, and, barb'rous,
flew,

So perish'd he whom vanity ensnar'd ;
Yet cruelty receiv'd its due reward :

N

Athens

Athens dismiss'd him from his high estate,
Who gave to *Innocence* the *Guilty's* fate.

The Sparrow is a bird too well known to need description here; he is very bold, and apt enough to follow other birds in their flight. The hawk, every body knows, is a bird of prey, and a most cruel enemy to the rest of the feathered tribe. This terrible destroyer is furnished with a beak and talons extremely strong, with which he easily tears in pieces whatever smaller bird falls in his way. And with such horror and dread are many birds struck on perceiving themselves within a certain distance of him, that they are deprived of all power to stir, and the enemy, who is always above the object of his aim, suddenly descends and seizes them.

It is thus that hawks act which are kept for diversion. But in that case, being se-

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cured, hooded, and used to the sport, the birds are taken without being destroyed, while the hawk is generously fed for his pains.

The latter part of this Tale is taken from history. The fact is exactly as here related of a member of the Areopagus, whom his fellow-citizens on that account dismissed from all his honours, justly observing, that the man who could kill a poor bird that had flown to him for protection, could not be a proper judge of right and wrong, or a defender of injured innocence.

APPLICATION.

The Sparrow ran into danger from his vanity, and from discontent with his situation. The moral is so obvious as hardly to require farther illustration. That cruelty even to animals, and breach of the laws

laws of hospitality, deserve punishment, the Athenians determined, who were Heathens.—Surely, then, it is a truth to which we as Christians should most strictly attend.



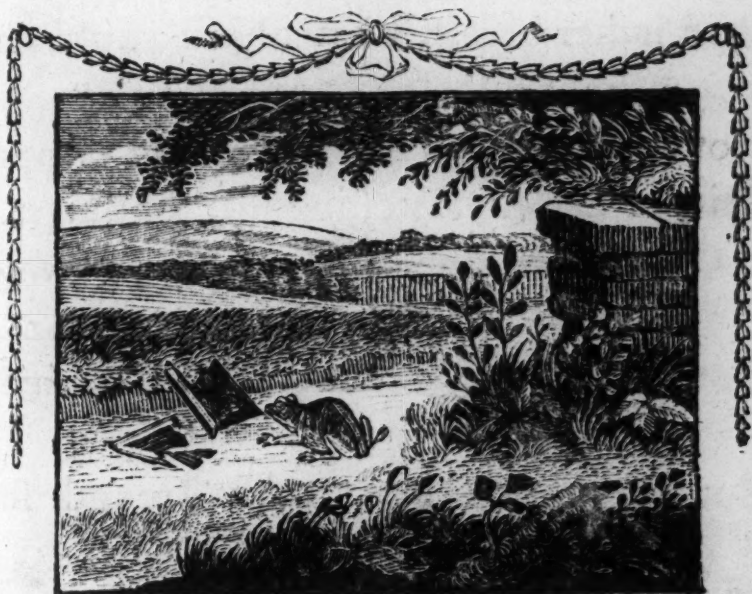
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T A L E XXVI.

THE DESTRUCTION OF ENVY.

A BLOATED Toad, with rankest poi-
 son swell'd,
 Who ev'ry pleasing sight with hate beheld,
 Had long by various arts subsistence found,
 And suck'd the venom from each tainted
 ground ;

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But

But discontented with her evil plight,
Pain in her breast, what object could delight?

Not her own kind her fury could escape,
Spite of herself, detesting still the shape.

Once on a time a mouse she envious
view'd,

And fast as she could crawl with spleen
pursu'd;

But all in vain her utmost strength she
spent,

Tho' added anger its assistance lent.

At last, arriving at a winding way,
Where by some chance a shatter'd mirror
lay,

Her own deform'd appearance there she
spies,

And gazes, fill'd with rage as with surprize;
A flood of poison she against it threw,

And thought at first the hated form with-
drew;

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But she returning, that returns again,
Which fills with venom ev'ry rising vein;
Collecting more, th' attack she fierce re-
news,
Yet still the object of her rage she views ;
Till, doubly swell'd, her final strength she
tries,
And in the vain attempt she bursts and
dies.

The Toad is a venomous, and account-
ed a very spiteful reptile ; though, hap-
pily, we do not find that it is in its power
to do much mischief. Her way of dis-
charging her venom is by spitting it with
force from her mouth ; but from this poi-
son no harm is to be feared, unless it hap-
pen to fall into a wound, or where the
skin has been rubbed off, so as to admit
its entrance to the blood.

This animal, however, is detestable
even

even to a proverb. In the hot climes of India, Toads grow to an enormous size, and are prodigiously full of venom; yet even there they are frequently known to be the food of monstrous serpents; whence it seems to follow, that the poison of one animal is not in every way dangerous to another: how far it may be so to itself is justly represented in the Tale. Toads have been known to burst with their own venom, when they have collected it in an extraordinary manner, and probably from their drawing in (in so doing) too great a quantity of air.

That these creatures will spit their venom against each other, and against their own appearance in a glass, is a received opinion that has never yet been refuted. The story above related was drawn from the accounts of gentlemen, whose veracity

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ty in matters of much higher importance has never been called in question.

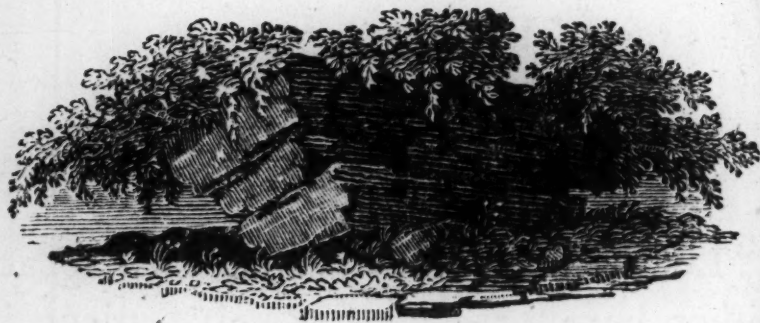
The Toad has been generally considered as an emblem of Envy; and what passion can be more hateful! Philosophers, painters, and poets have all, with great justice, given a most horrible description of this monster, who preys, as it were, upon itself, and whose only gleam of savage happiness lies in beholding the misfortunes of others, as she is confounded at their felicity.

APPLICATION.

Let none, as they value their peace either here or hereafter, give place in their bosoms to envy. Emulation of good or great actions is indeed commendable; but let us admire and revere, not hate, those whom we cannot excel or equal.—

To

To endeavour to bring other people down to our own level, when we despair of rising to their height, is a foolish and wicked principle; and such endeavours, being often frustrated, bring on a fate similar to that of the Toad alluded to in our Tale.



TALE



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T A L E XXVI.

THE BENIGHTED TRAVELLER.

A WEARY Trav'ler, who trac'd a
wild

Where miry paths his footsteps oft be-
guil'd,

At a lone heath arriv'd, when silent night,
Thro' Heav'n prevailing, shut the gates of
light;

Not

Not less bewilder'd, hopeless here he strays,
Where void of trees appears a fearful
maze.

How happy now could he some cottage
find,

A timely shelter from the piercing wind,
That bleak blew round him, while expos'd
he rov'd

Far from his home, and all the friends he
lov'd.

While thus he pass'd, a glimm'ring
flame he spy'd,

And fondly took it for a faithful guide :
O'er the rough heath, o'er moorlands
swift it flies,

Sometimes eludes and sometimes glads his
eyes ;

But yet he follows, tho' tis all in vain,
Toil still augments, and pain succeeds to
pain :

For

For thro' the lowlands by this light he
bends,

Unknowing whither each sad footstep
tends,

'Till, sinking with fatigue and care, at
length,

His mind o'erpower'd, exhausted all his
strength,

At distance he beholds the flatt'ring fire,
Offspring of damps, in marshes faint ex-
pire,

Himself on a morass now enter'd far,

To quit in safety is his only care,

To Heav'n he therefore bends in hum-
ble pray'r.

Favour'd, while struggling in the mire,
at last,

A friendly swain, who saw him as he pass'd,

His pity and humanity display'd,

And lent him in distress his useful aid,

O

Sincere

Sincere compassion from his heart ex-
press'd,

And to his homely dwelling led his guest :
Refreshment here he found, and wish'd re-
pose,

And, fresh with vigour, in the morn arose;
Now warn'd, resolv'd deluding fires to
shun,

Nor be by misplac'd confidence undone.

People who travel by night over
marshes, and other low and moist lands,
frequently observe lights, which those
who are unacquainted with them are apt
to mistake for persons carrying lanthorns,
or something of a similar kind. The
consequence is, that those unhappy peo-
ple long follow them in vain ; for at best
they lose their time and lose their way ;
but sometimes the consequences are more
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fatal. These fires, being kindled by vapours and damp, generally expire in marshes or ditches, into which unfortunate benighted travellers have been frequently known to follow them to their utter destruction, either by drowning or by suffocation.

Will-o'-the-Wisp and *Jack-a-Lantern* are the names commonly given to these false fires, which, in former days, were supposed to be the effects of witchcraft. There is, however, no such thing as witchcraft in nature ; and these lights are caused by the inflammable vapours just mentioned.

APPLICATION.

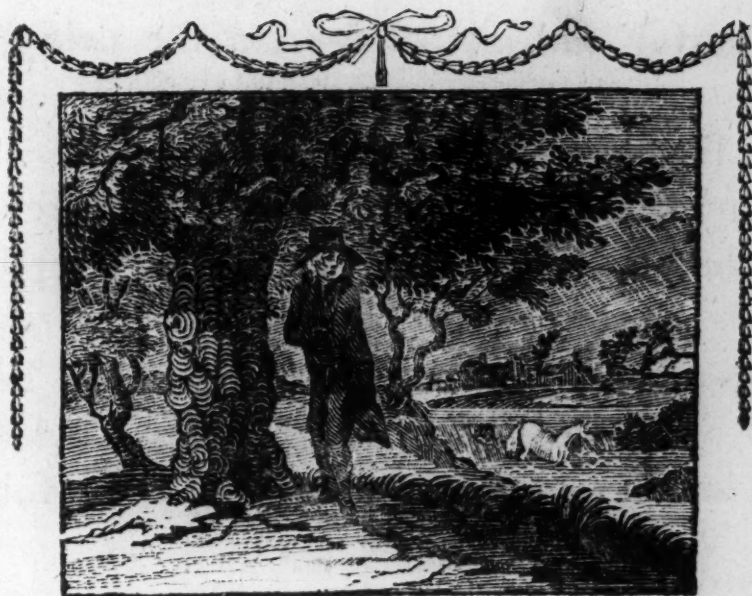
Besides these, it will be necessary for youth to beware and shun all false fires, as in the course of life they will be ex-

posed to many delusions. Time, place, and circumstances will be their best guides in such cases; but there is little good to be expected from proffered guidance, when young folks give themselves up to the tempest of their passions. It will be fortunate for those who withdraw in time, like the Traveller in the Tale. Reason will afford them shelter and consolation when once they have tasted of true repentance.



TALE

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T A L E XXVIII.

INGRATITUDE PUNISHED.

'T WAS on a day, when streams had
 burst their bounds,
 And rising floods o'erwhelm'd the level
 grounds :

O 3

A youth,

A youth, while yet descended swift the
rain,

Fearful and wet fled from the delug'd
plain,

A little eminence well pleas'd to see,
And take the shelter of a spreading tree;
There (tho' no longer now she sweetly
sung)

A pretty Nightingale had hatch'd her
young:

The Boy perceiving, ere the storm sub-
sides,

While scarce the streams roll'd back their
swelling tides,

Forgetful of what scenes had met his eyes,
He long'd to make the harmless birds his
prize.

Quickly he mounted, but too soon he
found

What made him still more quickly seek
the ground:

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A Serpent round the trunk had closely
twin'd,

As hoping timely shelter there to find ;
But when by hands so unexpected prest,
Strait spite and anger fir'd the reptile's
breast,

His venom'd tooth in all his rage he ply'd,
And forc'd the poison thro' each vein to
glide.

This felt the fugitive, but hopeless bled,
No help at hand he knew, for all were fled;
Tho' none, like him, amidst the gen'ral
fright,

Had basely mark'd their necessary flight.
At last return'd without the wish'd-for prey,
He reach'd his home at the decline of day,
Nor, till an hundred agonies he found,
Ceas'd the dire smart, or heal'd the burn-
ing wound.

Ungrateful boy, abominable deed,
Which thus successless found so sharp a
meed :

But

But while the recent memory remains,
A lesson of experience thus he gains ;
Much happier they in virtue who delight,
Nor need such monitors to set them right.

When the rains descend from the hills, swelling the small streams and narrow rivers, they often occasion very great damage ; infomuch, that houses and cattle, and sometimes even their unfortunate owners, are carried away in the general destruction. When such a dreadful circumstance as this takes place, people very naturally repair to rising grounds or to the tops of trees for safety. Serpents also ascend trees, particularly during storms or tempests, and twine themselves round the trunks, as related in our Tale ; in which situation, if disturbed, they naturally strike or bite the offending person.

Though the common Snake of this country is not much to be dreaded, yet in

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the Adder or Viper is contained a powerful poison, which, either in attack or defence, it emits with great effect. The bite, however, of the Serpents and other reptiles of warmer countries is yet more dangerous ; of many of them it is certain death, if the proper remedy be not instantly applied ; and even where the utmost care and attention is used, the patient experiences inexpressible torture before he obtains the expected relief.

APPLICATION.

The Boy that we have made the vehicle for conveying admonition in this Tale, was one of those restless mortals, who cannot be happy so long as they see any thing within their reach, of which they have not the absolute possession.— Not content, as he ought to have been, with

with having escaped the flood, and sheltered himself from the winds and rain by means of a friendly tree, he intended a cruel attack on the innocent inhabitants of its branches; but in his endeavour to do this injury, he met with a sharp rebuke from a creature not quite so defenceless as those on whom he meditated mischief.

The moral points out the folly of such as do not consider well before they undertake an enterprize, or who do not (according to the adage) *look before they leap*; and shews the detestable picture of ingratitude and cruelty, in return for providential deliverance in time of peril and danger.

T A L E

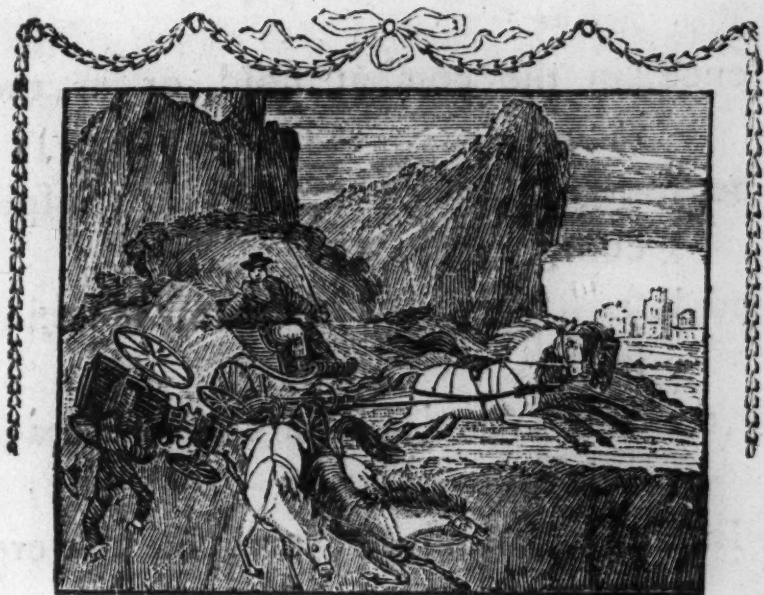
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T A L E XXIX.

ALCESTES AND PRÆTUS ; OR, PRU-
DENCE AN OVERMATCH FOR
STRENGTH.

IN the Olympic games, in days of yore,
The prize of fame heroic chieftains bore ;
And

And oft in contests such as these, in love
(Tho' rivals strong profess), whole cities
 strove ;

Hence in the combat bold, or in the
 race,

The sons of Greece shone with conspi-
 cuous grace,

And later Rome, with thirst of fame in-
 spir'd,

By the same means her share of praise ac-
 quir'd.

 In such a contest met, two youths were
 found,

Both in the chariot-race by all renown'd;
Not both alike, howe'er, in temper
 known,

For one seem'd form'd on steady rules
 alone ;

The other, all-impetuous in his might,
Alike rush'd eager to the race or fight.

The

The course prescrib'd them was a vary'd
scene,

Part a rough hill, and part a level green,
Which with attention either champion
eyes,

Since they must pass them both, or lose
the prize.

The judges sat; each had his rules as-
sign'd,

For other racers all the strife declin'd,
ALCESTES whirls his lash, the horses fly,
The goal he quickly views (in fancy)
nigh.

PRÆTUS pursues with swift and equal
course,

And skill, that easy match'd superior
force;

Now at the hill arriv'd, a pass they spy,
Where one alone could drive in safety
by;

P

On

On either side, a way as steep was seen
As the hill's height above the level green;
Now slow, but sure, the prudent PRÆ-
tus rides,

And with just care his faithful steeds he
guides ;

But tho' his rival sees him lead the way,
He hopes to snatch the glories of the day;
Swift he drives on, the narrow way to gain,
While PRÆTUS still entreats and warns in
vain,

With gen'rous offers, as he comes in view,
On equal terms the contest to renew :
ALCESTES, hearing, answers but in scorn,
And headstrong onward to the path is
borne ;

Backward his rival drew, but all too late,
For one must meet th' inevitable fate ;
And as beyond discretion he was gone,
His was the lot who urg'd the mischief on.
Down

Down the rough crag, while no relief was
nigh,

Chariot and Charioteer fell from on high;
Batter'd and crush'd ALCESTES lies be-
neath,

And groaning sad resigns his forfeit
breath ;

While PRÆTUS views the scene with
pitying eyes,

But (as he merited) bore off the prize.

The Olympic Games were first estab-
lished in Greece ; and of such import-
ance were they considered by that peo-
ple, that the time when they were cele-
brated marked the æra from which they
reckoned their years, as we do ours from
the birth of our Blessed Saviour. These
Games were also imitated by the Romans,
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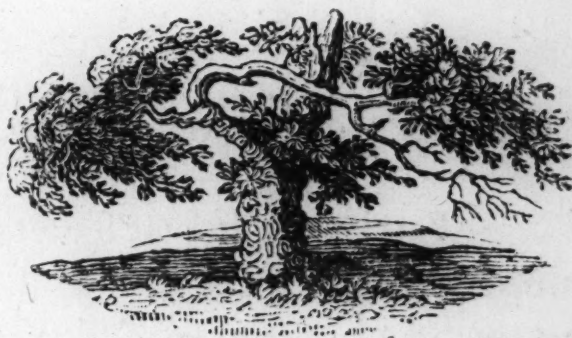
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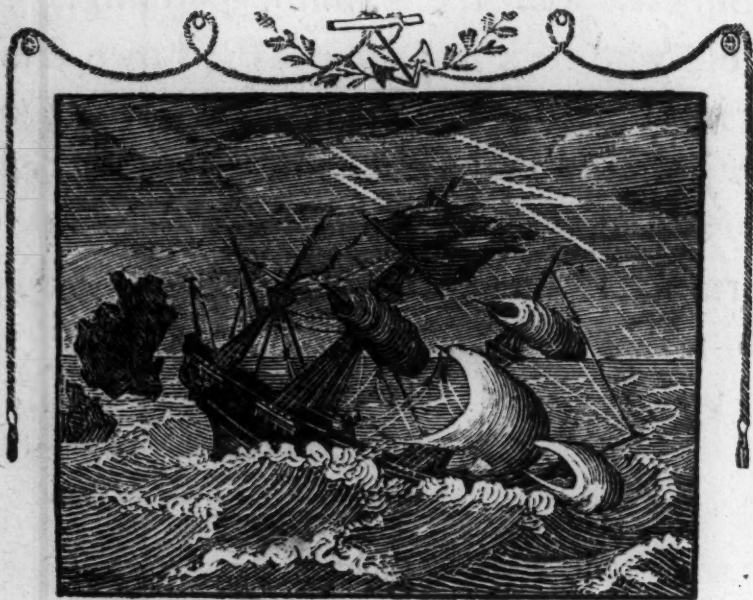
as a part of the ceremony at the funerals of considerable persons. In these the skill and prudence of the youths were tried; nor were those who had formerly acquired renown backward in the contest with the younger candidates.

APPLICATION.

To moralize on this Tale, let us observe, that it is intended as a lesson of prudence and moderation. Where the Passions are the steeds, it is essentially necessary that Reason should be the charioteer, to keep upon them a curbing rein; there will otherwise be neither happiness nor safety. And as in the common pursuits of life it is found that too much eagerness defeats its own purpose, so in matters of more serious importance, rashness,

rashness, and the criminal attempts of those who seek to promote their own fame or interests, by endangering the safety or prejudicing the reputation of others, are always detestable, and most commonly terminates in their own well deserved ruin.





T A L E X X X .

THE UNCERTAINTY OF PLEASURE.

A VESSEL trimly gilt, was seen to glide
 In a mild season down the crystal tide,
 Thence tow'rd the ocean pass'd with fav'-
 ring gales,
 That kiss'd her flag, and fill'd her filken
 sails ;

Round

Round

And g
Whil

Glow

Then

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The

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Round her the silver swans made stately
way,

And glitt'ring fishes swam in wanton play;
While vary'd clouds, in pleasing forms
that rise,

Glow'd with the beams which deck the
azure skies :

Then joy'd the mariners, nor fear'd to
find

A happy passage to the port assign'd.

Thus pass'd she on, 'till launching on
the main,

The skies grew black, the heav'ns pour'd
down the rain ;

The pow'rs that now disturb'd the angry
deep

Had op'd their gates, where dreadful
tempests sleep.

Too careless, while the crew their senses
drown'd

In flowing cups of wine, or rest profound.

Now,

Now, rous'd at once, far other scenes
they view'd
Than those which charm'd them on the
peaceful flood ;
For o'er their heads the mutt'ring thun-
ders roll,
And glowing lightnings flash from pole to
pole.
New toils succeed, and doubts and fears
arise,
Whence peace recedes and wanton plea-
sure flies ;
The filken sails are rent, and shiver'd all
At once the masts and purple streamers
fall ;
The rising billows o'er the vessel sweep,
Rocks threaten soon to overwhelm her in the
deep ;
Now valu'd gold, as dross, away they cast,
And, lighten'd, hop'd to reach the port at
last.

O'er

O'er ocean now, flow moving, fraught
 with woe,
 No more in gaudy trim, with pompous
 show,
 But sad, distress'd, in piteous state they
 go.

At length a shelt'ring port with toil
 they gain,
 Happy to 'scape the dangers of the main,
 No more desirous to display their pride,
 They thank their God for life, and trust
 in none beside.

Than the winds, it is well known, no-
 thing is more deceitful ; nothing more
 flattering in calm seasons, nor more dread-
 ful in a storm, than the ocean. When
 the billows rise, the thunders roar, the
 lightnings flash, and the fighting winds
 are so tempestuous as to render sails vain,
 and to carry away the lofty masts ; when
 the

the sea breaks over the ship, which lies entirely at the mercy of the waves, and frequently proves unfaithful by springing a leak below—then “*men’s hearts begin to fail them for very trouble* ;” then all pleasure vanishes, and even the most precious commodities are frequently thrown overboard, to lighten, and thus, if possible, to preserve the distressed vessel.

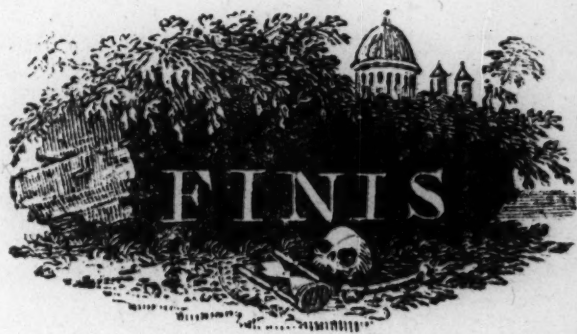
APPLICATION.

Too often do we set out in early youth with full expectation of possessing all we can wish for; and finding, perhaps, at first, that we bask in the calm sunshine of felicity, prepare to glide smoothly down the tide of pleasure, flattering ourselves that the hour of evil shall never overtake us. Alas, how often is the scene changed !—

How

How common is it for persons thus unprepared to experience afterwards all the tempests of life, and to be wrecked on the rocks and quicksands which lie beneath the stream of Pleasure.

Happier, much happier are those who, aware of such chances and changes, take Reason for their pilot, and address their prayers to Providence for direction in their course. By such a conduct only can we reasonably hope to reach the haven of everlasting happiness.



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